

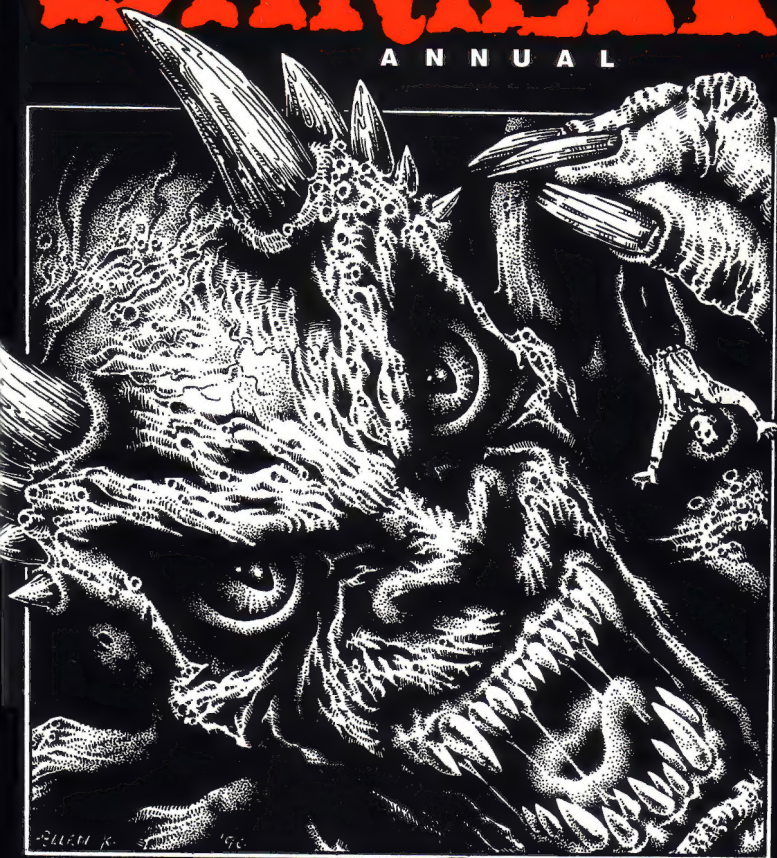


#1
WARNING:
Contains disturbing material
and is not intended for children!

GORETM SHRIEK

\$4.95

A N N U A L



ULCEER















GORETM SHRIEK

ANNUAL 1

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Directed and Produced by Tom Skulan and Hank Jansen

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GAG! TIME

"the GURCH" 90





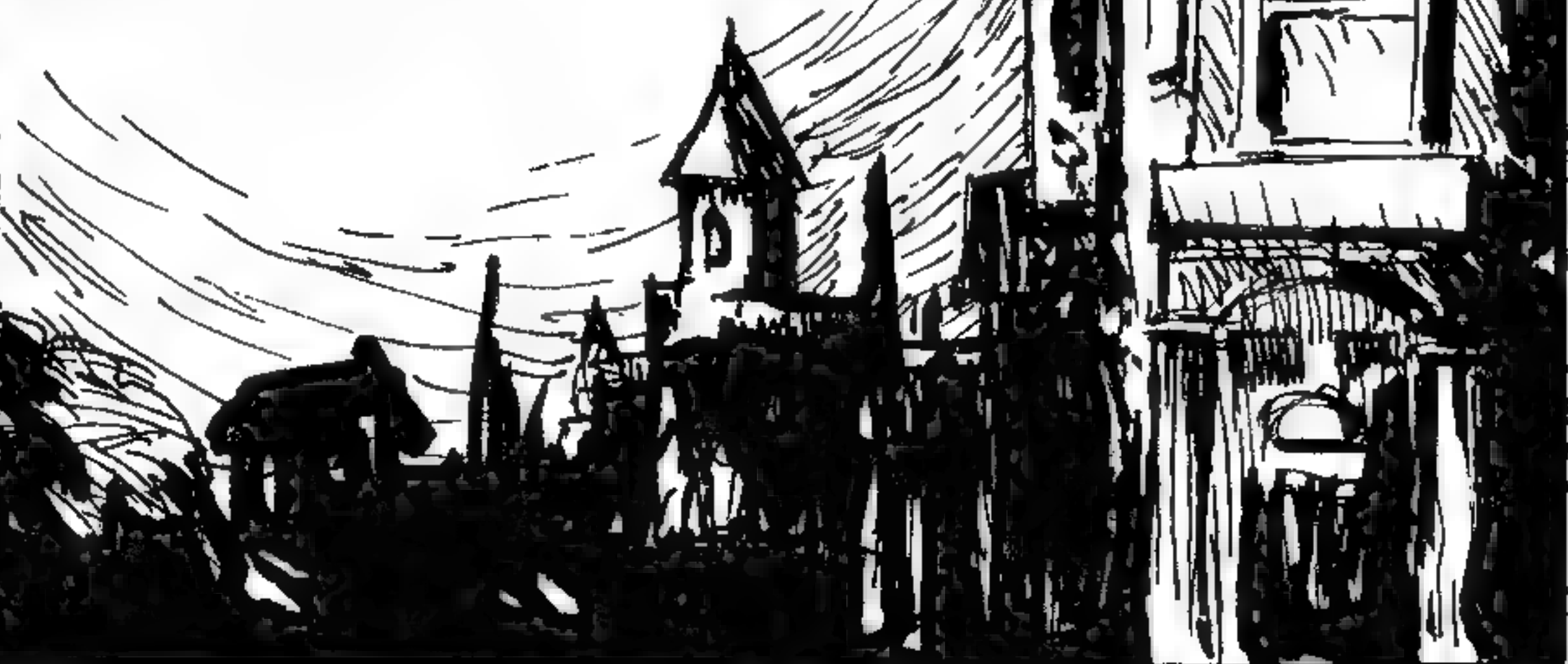
THE KIDS GOT GOOFY IN THE TRAGIC KINGDOM WHEN PLUTONIUM BLEW THEIR WAY!



Ambrose Biercé's OIL OF DOG

adapted + illustrated by
Eric Stanway

MY NAME IS BOFFER BINGS. I WAS BORN INTO ONE OF THE HUMBLER WALKS OF LIFE, MY FATHER BEING A MANUFACTURER OF DOG OIL, AND MY MOTHER HAVING A SMALL STUDIO IN THE SHADOW OF THE CHURCH, WHERE SHE DISPOSED OF UNWANTED BABES.



IN MY BOYHOOD, I WAS TRAINED IN THE HABITS OF INDUSTRY; I NOT ONLY ASSISTED MY FATHER IN PROCURING DOGS FOR HIS VAT...



...BUT WAS FREQUENTLY EMPLOYED BY MY MOTHER TO CARRY AWAY THE DEBRIS OF HER WORK IN THE STUDIO.



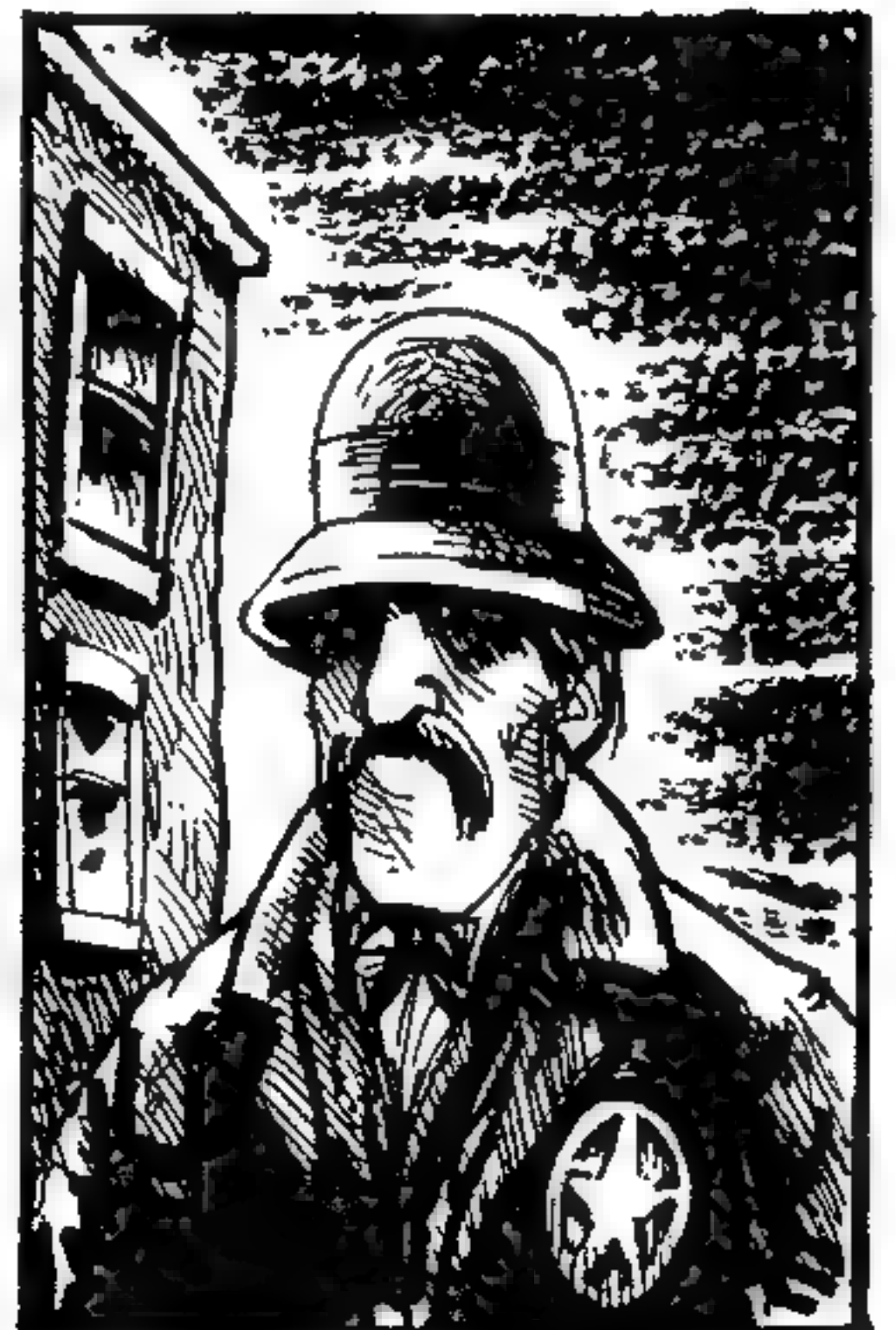
ONE EVENING, WHILE PASSING MY FATHER'S OIL FACTORY WITH A FOUNDLING FROM MY MOTHER'S STUDIO, I SAW THAT A CONSTABLE WAS WATCHING MY MOVEMENTS. YOUNG AS I WAS, I KNEW THAT A CONSTABLE'S ACTS ARE PROMPTED BY THE MOST REPREHENSIBLE MOTIVES.



I AVOIDED HIM BY DODGING INTO THE SIDE DOOR OF THE OILERY WHICH HAPPENED TO STAND AJAR. MY FATHER HAD LONG SINCE GONE HOME, AND THE PLACE STOOD EMPTY AND SILENT.



WHILE WAITING FOR THE CONSTABLE TO LEAVE, I UNWRAPPED THE BUNDLE, AND GAZED INTO THE FACE OF THE INFANT. I ALMOST WISHED THAT THE SMALL, RED WOUND ON ITS CHEST—THE WORK OF MY DEAR MOTHER—HAD NOT BEEN FATAL.



I COULDN'T LEAVE THE OILERY, WITH THE CONSTABLE WAITING OUTSIDE, AND I SAW ONLY ONE ALTERNATIVE. I REASONED THAT IT COULD NOT MATTER IF I PUT THE BABE IN THE CAULDRON—AND THE FEW DEATHS WHICH MIGHT RESULT FROM ADMINISTERING THE OINTMENT WOULD NOT BE IMPORTANT IN A POPULATION THAT INCREASES SO RAPIDLY.



THE NEXT DAY, MUCH TO MY SURPRISE, MY FATHER INFORMED US THAT HE HAD OBTAINED THE FINEST QUALITY OF OIL THAT WAS EVER SEEN. THE PHYSICIANS HAD DECLARED IT SO.



I DEEMED IT MY DUTY TO EXPLAIN WHAT I HAD DONE—THOUGH PALSIED WOULD HAVE BEEN MY TONGUE IF I COULD HAVE FORESEEN THE CONSEQUENCES.



BEWAILING THEIR PREVIOUS IGNORANCE, MY PARENTS TOOK MEASURES AT ONCE TO COMBINE THEIR INDUSTRIES; MY MOTHER'S STUDIO MOVED INTO A WING OF THE OILERY, AND MY DUTIES CEASED ALTOGETHER.





SO SUDDENLY THROWN INTO IDLENESS, I MIGHT NATURALLY HAVE BECOME VICIOUS AND DISSOLUTE, BUT I DID NOT. MY HOLY MOTHER WAS EVER AROUND TO PROTECT ME FROM THE TEMPTATIONS THAT BESET YOUTH, AND MY FATHER WAS A DEACON IN THE CHURCH.

AS THEIR BUSINESS PROSPERED, THE PRODUCTION OF DOG OIL BECAME THE SINGLE DRIVING PASSION OF MY PARENTS' LIVES.



BUT NOW, THEY NOT ONLY REMOVED UNWELCOME AND SUPERFLUOUS BABES TO ORDER.



... BUT WENT OUT ONTO THE HIGHWAYS AND BYWAYS, GATHERING IN CHILDREN OF LARGER GROWTH...



AND EVEN SUCH ADULTS AS COULD BE ENTICED INTO THE OILERY.



SO ENTERPRISING HAD THEY BECOME, THAT A PUBLIC MEETING WAS HELD, CENSURING THEM. THEY WERE INFORMED BY THE CHAIRMAN THAT ANY FURTHER RAIDS UPON THE CITIZENRY WOULD BE MET IN A SPIRIT OF THE UTMOST HOSTILITY.



MY POOR PARENTS LEFT THE MEETING BROKENHEARTED, DESPERATE, AND, I BELIEVE, NOT ALTOGETHER SANE.



ANYHOW, I DEEMED IT PRUDENT NOT TO ENTER THE OILERY WITH THEM THAT NIGHT, BUT SLEPT OUTSIDE, IN A STABLE.



AT ABOUT MIDNIGHT, SOME MYSTERIOUS IMPULSE CAUSED ME TO RISE AND PEER THROUGH A WINDOW INTO THE FURNACE ROOM, WHERE I KNEW MY FATHER NOW SLEPT.



THE FIRES WERE BURNING BRIGHTLY, AND ONE OF THE CAULDRONS WAS "WALLOPING" SLOWLY, AS IF IN ANTICIPATION OF THE NEXT DAY'S HARVEST.



MY FATHER WAS NOT IN BED; HE HAD RISEN IN HIS NIGHT-CLOTHES...



... AND WAS PREPARING A NOOSE FROM A PIECE OF LONG CORD.



FROM THE LOOKS HE CAST AT THE DOOR OF MY MOTHER'S BEDROOM, I KNEW ALL TOO WELL THE PURPOSE HE HAD IN MIND.



SUDDENLY, THE DOOR OF MY MOTHER'S APARTMENT WAS OPENED, NOISELESSLY.



AND THE TWO CONFRONTED EACH OTHER, BOTH APPARENTLY SURPRISED.



THE LADY, ALSO, WAS IN HER NIGHT-CLOTHES, AND SHE HELD IN HER RIGHT-HAND THE TOOL OF HER TRADE.



FOR
ONE
MOMENT...



THEY LOOKED INTO
EACH OTHER'S
BLAZING EYES...



...THEN SPRANG AT
EACH OTHER WITH
INDESCRIBABLE FURY...



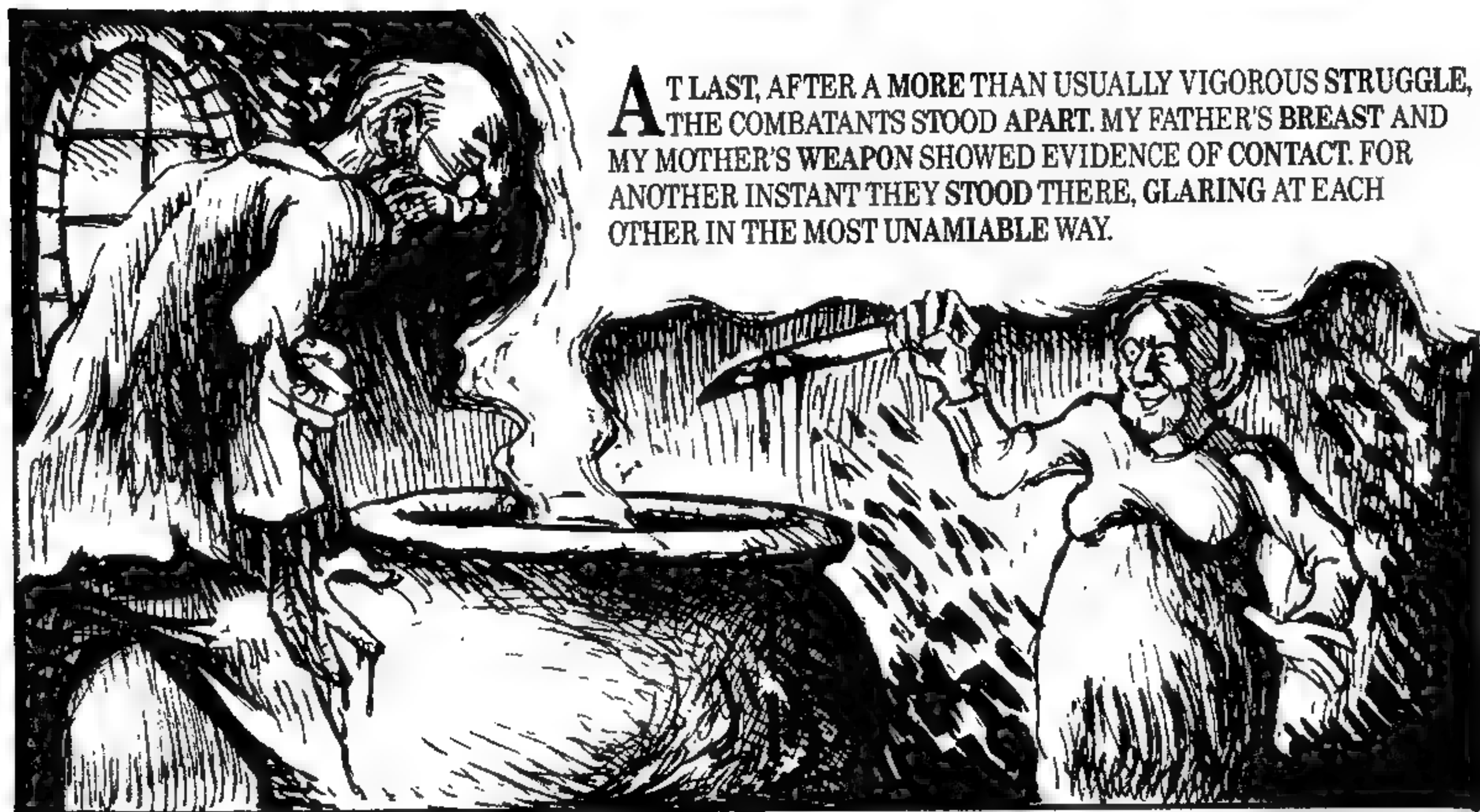
THE MAN
CURSING...



THE WOMAN
SHRIEKING...



BOTH FIGHTING
LIKE DEMONS...



AT LAST, AFTER A MORE THAN USUALLY VIGOROUS STRUGGLE,
THE COMBATANTS STOOD APART. MY FATHER'S BREAST AND
MY MOTHER'S WEAPON SHOWED EVIDENCE OF CONTACT. FOR
ANOTHER INSTANT THEY STOOD THERE, GLARING AT EACH
OTHER IN THE MOST UNAMLABLE WAY.

SUDDENLY, MY POOR WOUNDED FATHER, FEELING THE HAND OF DEATH UPON HIM, LEAPT FORWARD, GRASPED MY MOTHER IN HIS ARMS, DRAGGED HER TO THE SIDE OF THE CAULDRON, AND SPRANG IN WITH HER!



IN A MOMENT, BOTH HAD DISAPPEARED, AND WERE ADDING THEIR OIL TO THAT OF THE COMMITTEE OF CITIZENS WHO HAD INVITED THEM TO THAT PUBLIC MEETING THE DAY BEFORE.



CONVINCED THAT THESE UNHAPPY EVENTS CLOSED TO ME EVERY AVENUE TO AN HONORABLE CAREER IN THAT TOWN, I MOVED TO THE FAMOUS CITY OF OTUMWEE



... WHERE THESE MEMOIRS ARE WRITTEN WITH A HEART FULL OF REMORSE FOR A HEEDLESS ACT ENTAILING SO DISMAL A COMMERCIAL DISASTER.



BACK FROM THE DEAD!

DEEP RED

ARGENTO:
Face to Face

The Strange
Case of
Ruggero
Deodato

Over the Edge:
IN A
GLASS CAGE

Unsung
Gutslinger
SHAUN
HUTSON

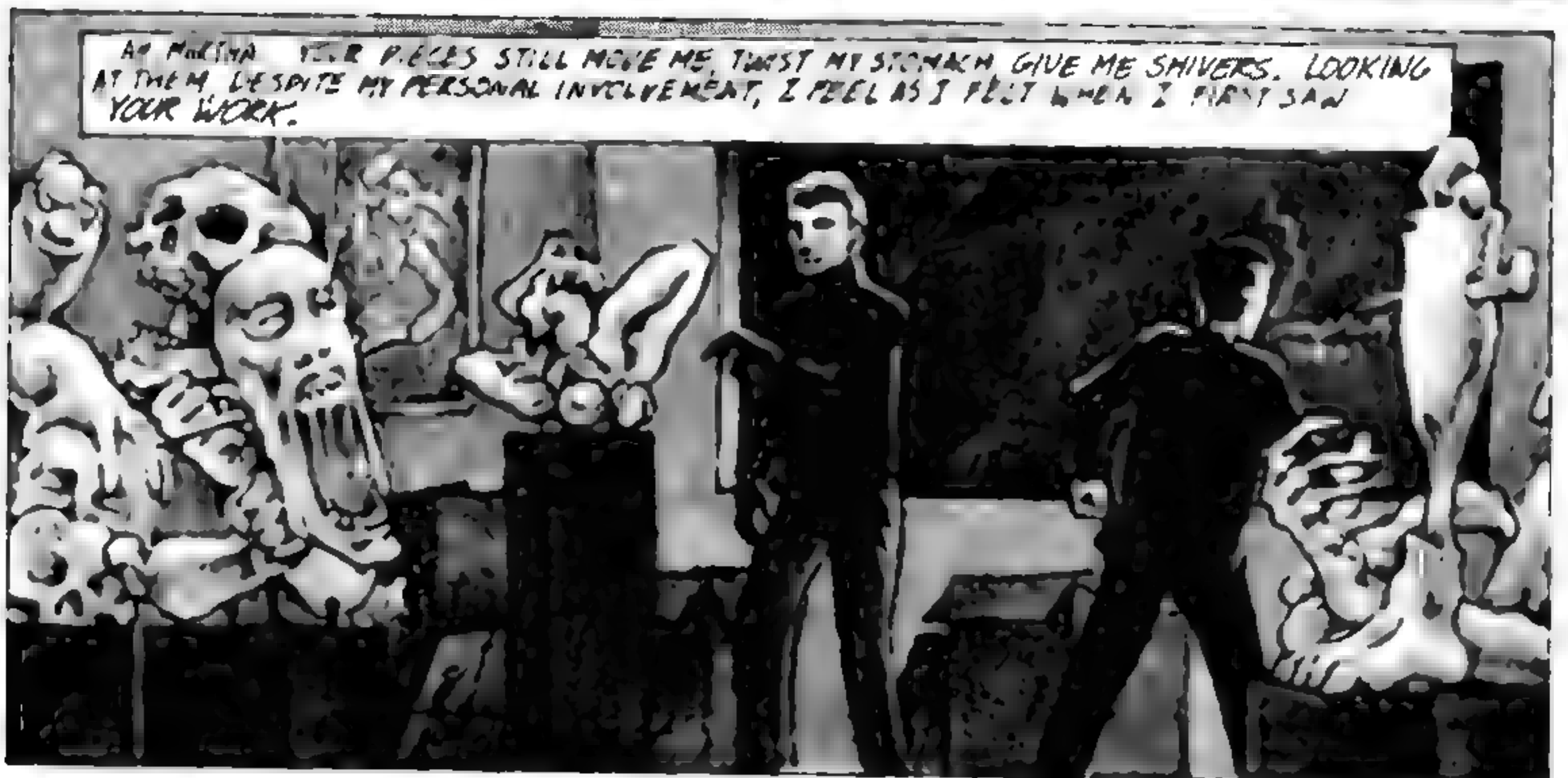
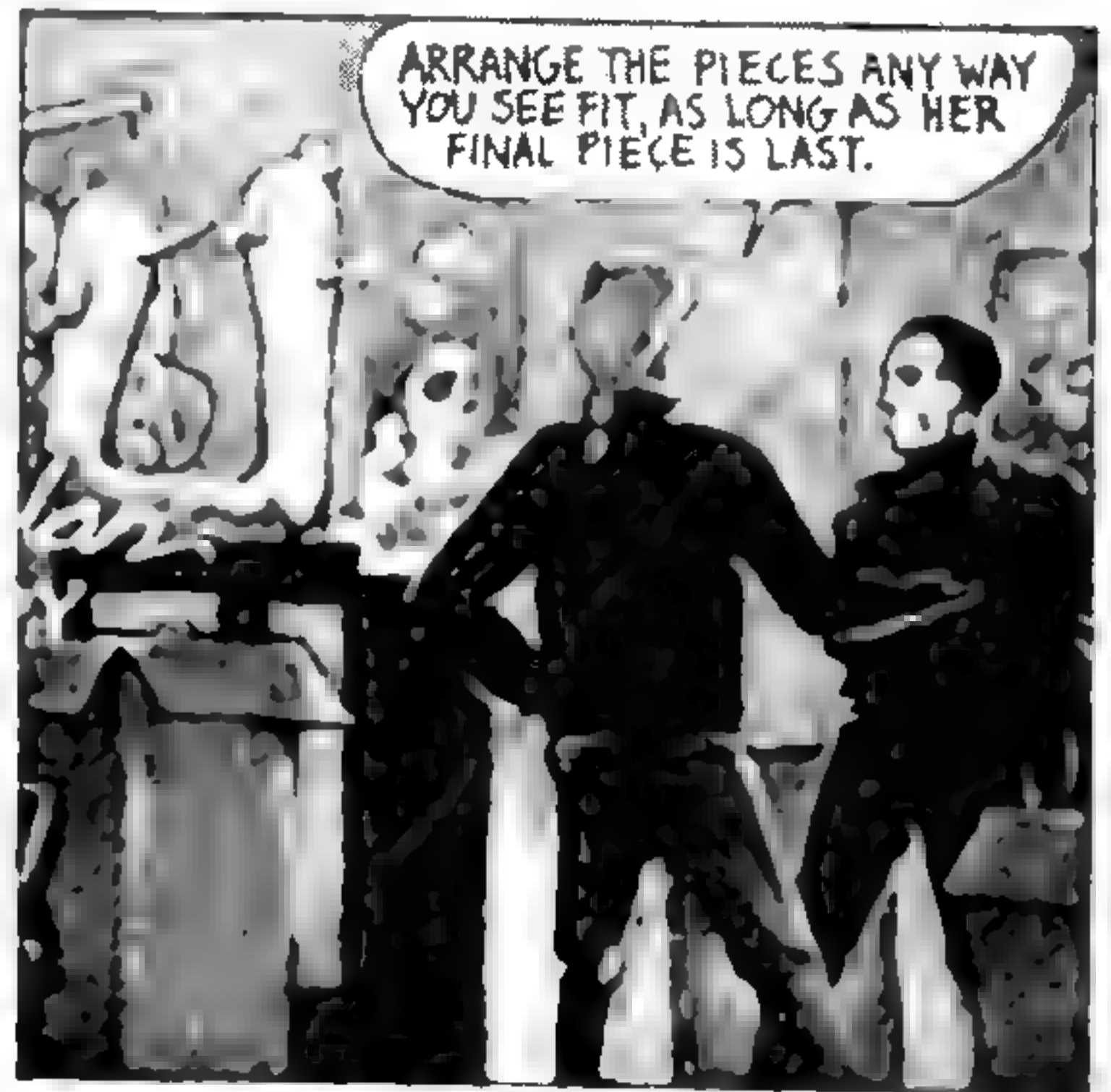
**CHUNK
BLOWER**
A Movie
With Guts

Gore Gone
Wild
GUINEA PIG

Fantaco
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COMING THIS WINTER...

CAST LIKENESS



I WAS TAKING SOME ART CLASSES AT NIGHT SCHOOL IN MANHATTAN AND WORK V. NOTHING JOBS DURING THE DAY TO PAY FOR IT. BETWEEN PAYING FOR CLASSES AND RENT, I WAS HARDLY GETTING BY, BUT I WASN'T CONSIDERING A THIRD JOB UNTIL I SAW MARTHA ENGLE'S PERSONALS AD FOR AN ASSISTANT.



I KNEW WHO MARTHA ENGLE WAS, HELL, ANYONE REMOTELY ART LITERATE KNEW HER NAME. SHE WAS ONE OF THE STARS OF THE NEW YORK CITY GALLERY SCENE. THE THING WAS WHAT WITH WHOLE, WORK, AND MY OWN ART I HADN'T HAD TIME TO CHECK OUT MANY STARS. THE FACT IS I HADN'T EVER SEEN MARTHA ENGLE'S WORK BEFORE THEN.





MARTHA ENGLE SEEMED PRETTY SECRETIVE ABOUT HER WORK, BUT THE PIECES WERE FANTASTIC, AND SHE SEEMED FRIENDLY ENOUGH. AT THE END OF THE DAY SHE TOLD ME THAT IF I WANTED, I COULD WORK FULL TIME FOR HER. SHE OFFERED TWICE WHAT I WAS EARNING IN MY OTHER JOBS. IT WAS UNUSUAL, BUT I AGREED. I QUIT AT THE OTHER PLACES AND DEVOTED MY TIME TO THE STUDIO.

MIXING LARGE AMOUNTS OF ALGINATE AND PLASTER WAS THE MOST IMPORTANT PART OF THE JOB, BUT I ALSO FETCHED FOOD AND SUPPLIES, AND OCCASIONALLY CUT WOODEN BOARDS AND BUILT STANDS.

DURING MY BREAKS I WOULD STUDY MARTHA'S SCULPTURES, AND THE DETAILED PRELIMINARY SKETCHES THAT ACCOMPANIED THEM



I WAS PUZZLED BY THE NOTATIONS ON HER DRAWINGS. THEY SEEMED NOT TO BE COMMENTS OR EXPLANATIONS OF THE SKETCHES, BUT DESCRIPTIONS OF THE PIECES THEMSELVES.

I LIVED FOR THE DAYS SHE WOULD COME OUT OF HER PRIVATE STUDIO, ALWAYS WITH TWO OR THREE NEW PIECES, COMPLETE BUT FOR A FEW FINISHING TOUCHES.



HOW COULD THIS BE THE PERSON WHO CREATED THESE GRUESOME
PIECES? LIKE THE SURGEON, WHO SPENDS HIS DAYS SOAKING
HIMSELF IN BLOOD, THEN GOING OUT AND MINGLING WITH SOCIETY
LIKE ANY OTHER MAN, THE MARTH ENGLE WHO WALKED OUT OF THE

STUDIO SEEMED TOTALLY
REMOVED FROM THE ARTIST
MAKING THESE SCULPTURES



THIS TIME I SKIPPED MY CLASS TO
SPEND THE EVENING STUDYING HER
LATEST.



AGAIN THE STRANGE NOTES. THEY SEEMED
TO BE DESCRIPTIONS OF THE ACTIONS REQUIRED
TO CREATE THE MUTILATED BODY PARTS
IN HER PIECES.



SHE CAME BACK A FEW HOURS LATER.



I WAS STILL STUDYING YOUR NEW
WORK. I'LL GET GOING.

OH, IT'S OKAY. COME IN AN HOUR
OR SO LATER TOMORROW, ALRIGHT?

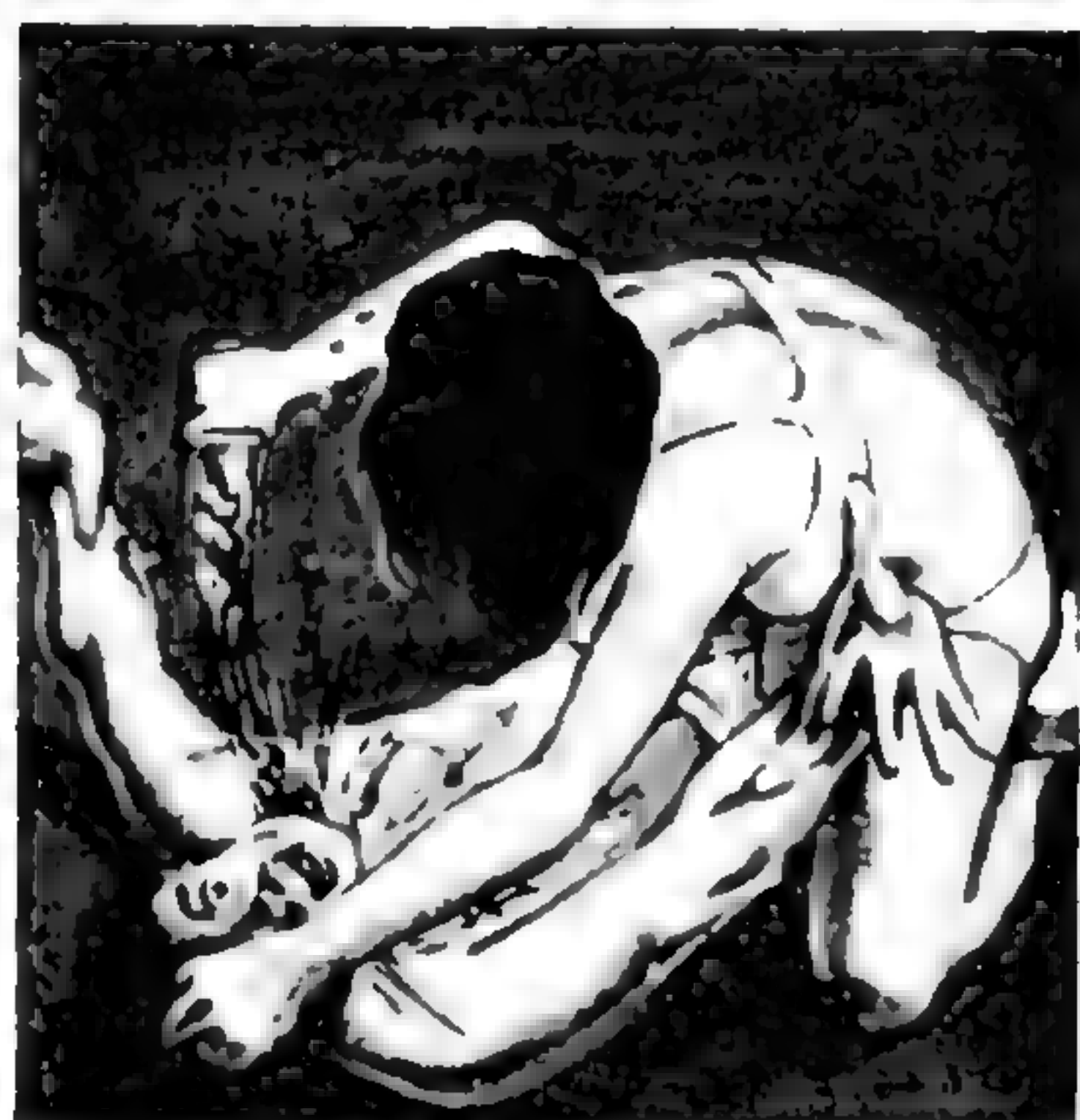


I LEFT AS SOON AS I COULD. I WONDERED ABOUT HER
LOVER, AND ABOUT THE STRANGE JEALOUSY I WAS
SURPRISED I FELT.



I SPENT A RESTLESS NIGHT TOSSING AND TURNING. I KEPT TURNING ON MY LIGHT AND STUDYING MY COPIES OF MARTHA'S SKETCHES. ON THE LATEST ONES, I'D COPIED HER NOTES.

FORGETTING MARTHA'S REQUEST FOR ME TO COME LATER THE NEXT MORNING, I INSTEAD WENT IN EARLY.



HE TASTED THE POISON IN THE COFFEE AND FIGURED IT ALL OUT... LUCKY YOU WERE HERE.

MARTHA STARED DOWN GRIMLY AT THE BODY ON THE FLOOR. HALF NAKED, BLOOD SPATTERED, THIS WAS THE PERSON WHO CREATED THE NIGHTMARISH OBJECTS IN HER STUDIO.

GO AHEAD, YOU KNOW WHAT TO DO. TWO BUCKETS ALGINATE, A BUCKET OF PLASTER. KEEP IT COMING.

I WAS NOT SHOCKED BY WHAT I HAD SEEN, INSTEAD IT FELT LIKE A COMPLETION OF MY KNOWLEDGE. WHAT I'D SEEN MARTHA DO, WHAT SHE'D CLEARLY DONE BEFORE, FIT NEATLY INTO THE PUZZLE OF HER WORK. I KNEW NOW HER SECRETS, AND SHE WAS TRUSTING ME WITH THEM BUT I HAD TO WATCH HER WORK. I WANTED TO GET MY HANDS DIRTY. I TRULY WANTED TO ASSIST.

THE PRIVATE AREA WAS DIVIDED BY A CURTAIN. ONE SIDE WAS A SPARSELY FURNISHED BEDROOM, THE OTHER SIDE...

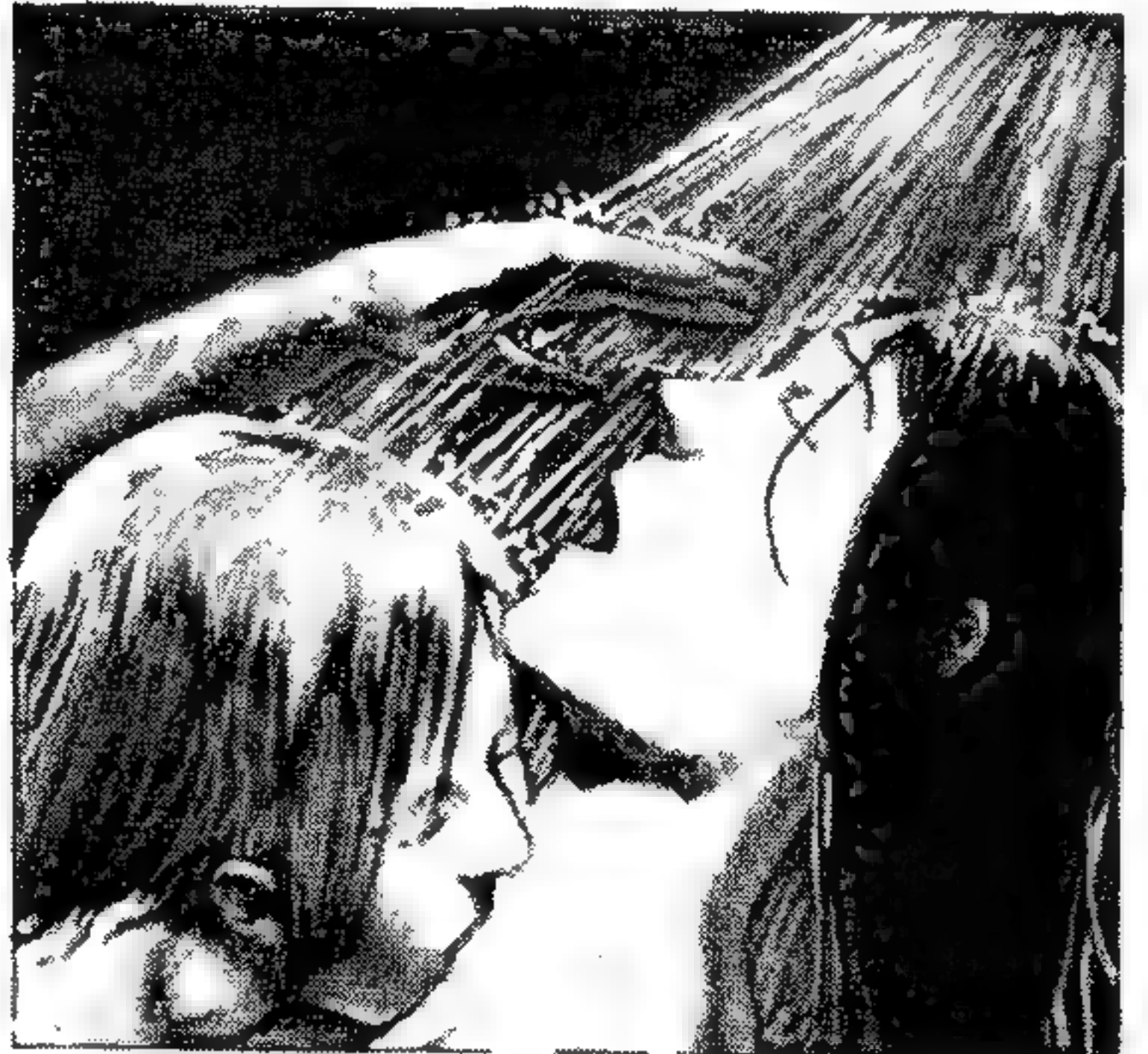
...WAS WHERE SHE DID HER WORK.



I CONTINUED TO ASSIST ALL DAY AND TILL THE EVENING. AFTER A WHILE SHE ALLOWED ME TO HELP WITH THE CASTING, AND THEN WITH THE MANIPULATING, CUTTING, RIPPING, AND SCULPTING OF THE MAN'S FLESH. LATE IN THE EVENING, THE PLASTER COOLING IN THE MOLDS, MARTHA AND I BROUGHT WHAT WAS LEFT OF THE BODY TO THE FURNACE, AND WE WATCHED IT BURN.



WE WASHED OURSELVES OF THE BLOOD AND PLASTER...



AND SURRENDERED OURSELVES TO THE NIGHT.



MARTHA TAUGHT ME. WITH HER GUIDANCE I SAW THE HIDDEN ASPECTS OF HER SKETCHES, AND WAS ABLE TO RE-EVALUATE WHAT I'D PREVIOUSLY SEEN IN THEM. OUR ROMANCE AND MY APPRENTICESHIP FLOURISHED OVER THE NEXT FEW MONTHS, THEN THE GALLERY CALLED.



MARTHA SEEMED TROUBLED AFTER THE CALL. I DIDN'T UNDERSTAND. SHE'D HAD A SCORE OF GALLERY APPEARANCES IN THE PAST.



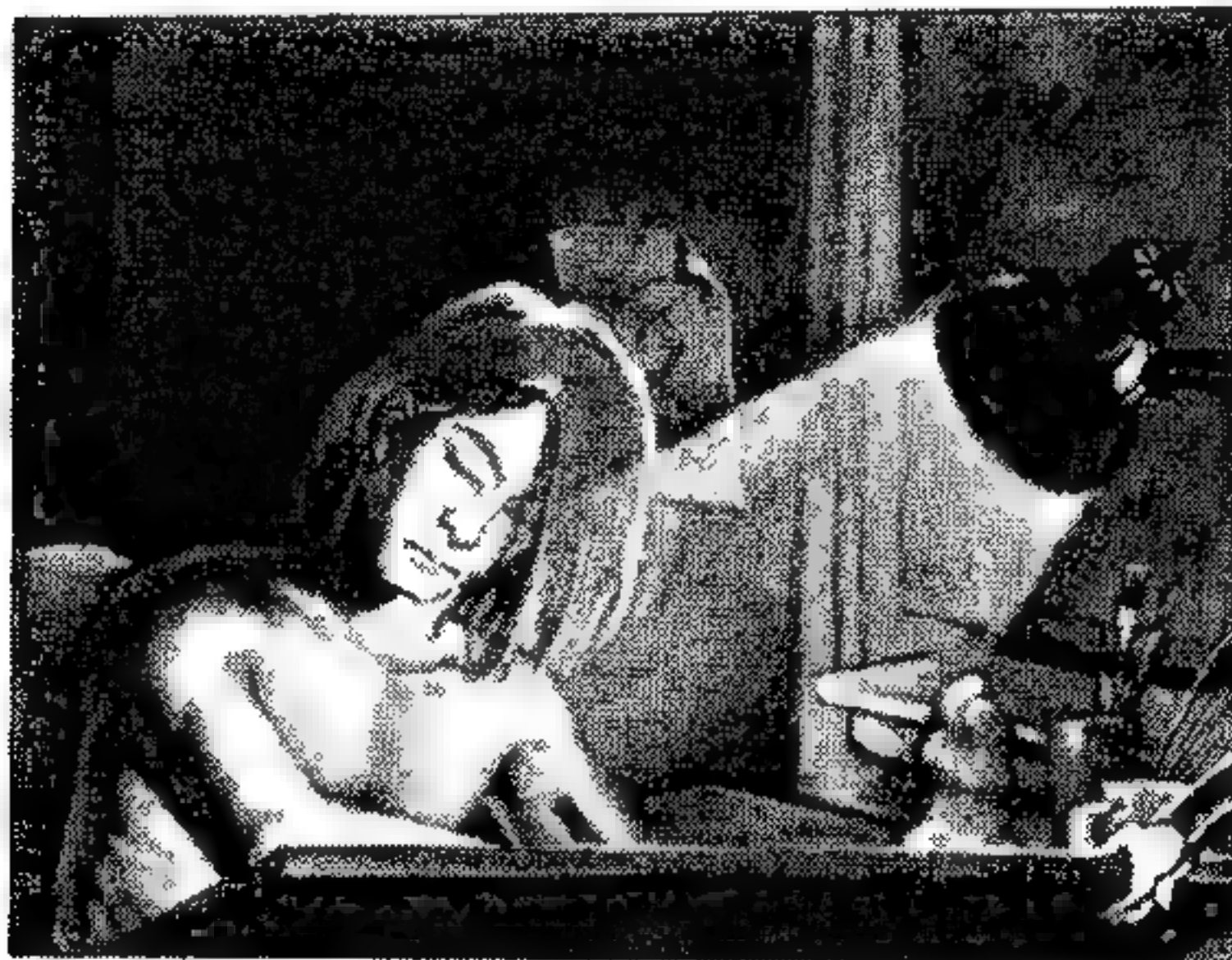
SHE LOCKED HERSELF IN HER ROOM, SO I BUSIED MYSELF WITH STRAIGHTENING UP THE STUDIO. I KNEW MARTHA WOULD FIND THE SOLUTION. ALL GREAT GENIUSES GET UPSET WITH THEIR WORK. SHE WOULD FIND A WAY OUT OF IT.



SHE FINALLY EMERGED A COUPLE OF DAYS LATER. SHE SAID SHE HAD AN IDEA, BUT NEEDED TIME TO MAKE SKETCHES AND NOTES. I WAS TO COME BACK TO THE STUDIO AT NINE IN THE MORNING TWO DAYS HENCE.



AT HOME I WORKED ON MY OWN SKETCHES. I HAD AN IDEA OF WHAT I WANTED TO DO WITH MY OWN WORK, BUT I WAS MISSING SOMETHING. I HAD TAKEN WHAT I NEEDED FROM MARTHA'S ART, BUT I FELT MY OWN WAS LACKING SOMETHING... PERSONAL.



I CAME BACK AT THE AGREED TO TIME.



IT WAS VERY QUIET.



I SAW THE CLOSED CURTAIN.



AAAAH!

BUT EVEN AS I SCREAMED, I KNEW. I KNEW. I FELT NO GUILT, AND, LIKE THE DISCOVERY OF MARTHA'S MURDERING, IT FIT LIKE A JIGSAW PIECE INTO MY KNOWLEDGE OF MARTHA'S WORK. THIS WAS NO SUICIDE BORN OF DEPRESSION...





YOUR GREATEST WORK INDEED, MARTHA, AND I WAS
HONORED TO BE YOUR HANDS IN THE MAKING OF IT.



I THANK YOU ALSO FOR YOUR LAST LESSON TO ME.
HAVING LEARNED IT, I KNOW NOW HOW TO GIVE
MY WORK THAT PERSONAL TOUCH.



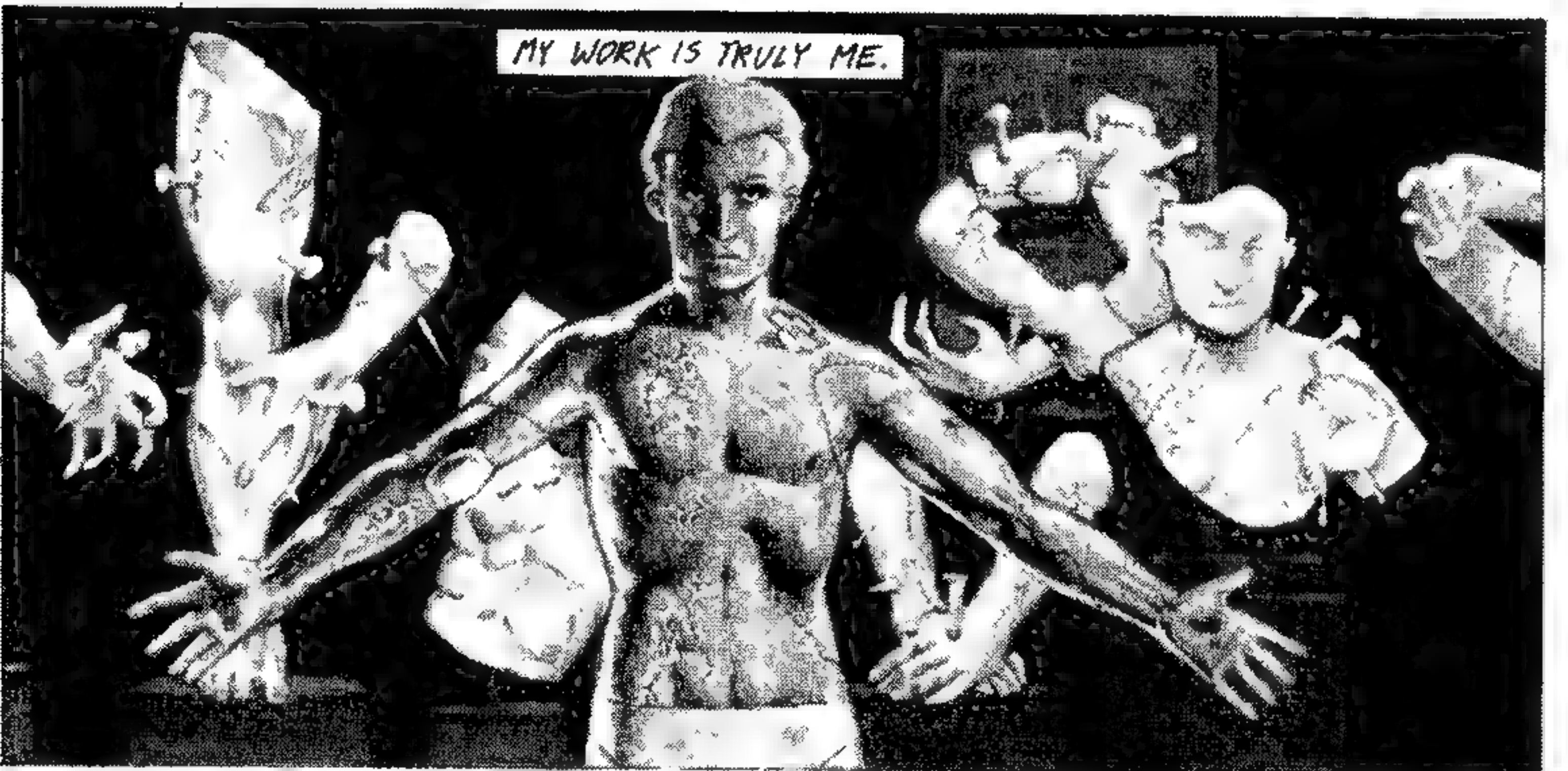
I'VE MOVED AWAY FROM YOUR ABSTRACT STANDARD,
MARTHA. I WAS ALWAYS MORE INCLINED TOWARDS
REALISM.



AND, I THINK YOU WOULD AGREE,



MY WORK IS TRULY ME.



R
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Illustrated by
CHAS. BALUN



COMING *for* HALLOWEEN

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CRYING WOLF

by
Rick Hautala

I

The summer sun had started to set, stretching long blue shadows over the front yard. Billy Lewis was sitting on the front steps of his house, staring earnestly at Sarah Cummings, who was leaning over her handlebars and straddling her bicycle on the walkway in front of him. Billy was only eleven years old, so there was nothing provocative about Sarah's stance; it just made him a bit uncomfortable.

"You're like that kid in the story who was always crying wolf, you know that? I'll bet this is just another one of your stupid stories," Sarah said. She huffed, blowing her breath up into her face and making her bangs jostle.

"It isn't," Billy said earnestly. "You've gotta believe me. I saw lights on at the Layman house for the last three nights in a row."

Against her will, Sarah shivered. Although she couldn't see the Layman house from Billy's front yard, she knew all about the decrepit old place. Built at the end of a dirt road that wound out through the woods behind Billy's house, it was at least a hundred years old. No one had lived in it for...well, at least as long as Sarah could remember. The few times she had asked her mother about it, her mother had simply commanded her to stay out of the place. "It's dangerous in there," she had said, shaking her head with exasperation. "You never know when a floor or something will give way and cave in on you. Stay out of it!"

Warnings like that from just about every parent in Hilton hadn't stopped just about every kid in town from going into the house at least once in their life. Most of them made their entries during the day, usually with several friends for mutual support; and most of them came away disappointed. There was no dust-covered furniture, no heavy

curtains that shifted eerily in the wind. It was just an empty house with faded, peeling wallpaper and exposed lath where the walls had crumbled away. The windows had practically no glass at all in them, and the rocks that had done the damage were scattered over the floors like boulders in a New England field. Oh, yeah, sure there were probably rats in the walls, and there was a terrible smell in the dank cellar, but that was to be expected. The Laymon house was nothing but an old, abandoned house--scary and spooky, especially to overactive imaginations, but certainly not haunted...not really!

Over the years, a few kids had dared to enter the house at night. More often than not it was part of some silly initiation rite for some gang or other. No one, to Sarah's knowledge had ever spent a whole night in the house, but then again, she was only twelve years old. She had heard stories from her older sister! She had no intention of going there, even on a sunny day like this!

"Well, I think you're just trying to scare me," Sarah said. "This is just like the time you had me and everyone else convinced there was a ghost out at Cedar Pond Cemetery. A bunch of us went out there, and you had rigged up a sheet with a flashlight under it hanging from a tree."

"That was just a Halloween trick--a little early," Billy said. Still sitting, he leaned forward, his elbows on his knees.

"And how about the time you got my brother, Johnny, and Curt all convinced there was a werewolf in the woods behind Canal School? Remember?"

Billy shrugged coyly.

"You guys stayed out in the woods all night looking for it, and what did you get? Johnny came home with a cold that almost

turned into pneumonia. And he got grounded for two weeks after he got better 'cause he lied to my folks about sleeping out in your back yard that night."

"Well...there was something out there in the woods," Billy said. "I heard it--and Johnny and Curt heard it."

"And I'll just bet you're making this one up, too," Sarah said sharply. Her grip on her handlebars tightened, and she cast a fearful look behind her. "And even if there is someone out there, how come you're so sure it's that killer that escaped from Thomaston?"

"It's gotta be him," Billy said, his eyes wide and glistening. "If any of the guys were staying out there, don't you think we would have heard about it?"

"Then how come you haven't told Johnny and Curt about it?" Sarah asked pointedly. "They're your best friends."

"They probably wouldn't believe me," Billy said sullenly. "'Specially not after that werewolf thing."

"And you expect me to believe you?"

Billy shrugged and said nothing.

"Well I don't!" Sarah said. She shifted her foot on the bicycle pedal, making ready to turn and ride away.

"Wait!" Billy barked, so suddenly Sarah let out a surprised little squeal.

"What is it?" Sarah asked, exasperated.

"Look, how often do I ask you a favor?" Billy said.

Sarah shrugged, thinking. More often than not Billy, like her brother Johnny, made it a point of honor to ignore her...and irritate her, when possible.

"You gotta believe me, Sarah. I'm positive that killer's out there, and I..."

"Then why don't you just go to the police and tell them?" Sarah asked.

"Because they'd believe me even less than you do," Billy said. "I want to go out there tonight and peek in the cellar window, just to make sure. But I need someone else there to see, too, so they can back me up when I go to the cops."

Sarah shook her head and scratched the side of her neck. She could still feel the sprinkling of goosebumps that had arisen when Billy had first mentioned the Laymon house. Another deeper shiver ran up her back now as she stared blankly at the long shadows on the ground.

"Make an anonymous call to the police,

then," she said.

"You ain't chicken-shit, are you?" Billy asked.

Sarah almost wanted to say she was chicken-shit, and she didn't care if Billy or Johnny or anyone else knew it.

"I figure," Billy went on, "if we keep this just between you and me, then we're gonna be the town heroes for helping nail this guy. I'll bet we even get our picture in the newspaper--maybe even get on T.V. and meet the governor and stuff!"

Sarah knew Billy was tempting her, laying down a line of honey to draw her in; and she knew she would follow her first impulse--tell Billy to take a hike!--and bike away. Forget about him and his hair-brained story about the escaped killer living out there in the Laymon house. Why would a convicted killer go there in the first place? How would he have even known about it? This was just another instance of Billy trying to sucker people in with another one of his wild stories.

But, just like her Dad was always telling her, there's always another side to everything. Granted, the escaped killer might not be living out there...there might not be anyone out there, but if there was...if there was then, like Billy said, she would be a hero. And if nothing else, that would certainly slap Johnny into place--that she was counted in, and he wasn't.

"So--uh, what are you going to do?" Sarah asked. She swung off her bike, laid it gently down on the ground, and came over to sit on the steps beside Billy.

"Can you get out tonight and meet me out behind my house around, say, eleven o'clock?" Billy asked. His voice had a conspiratorial hush, and she didn't like the way he wouldn't look her straight in the eyes.

Gnawing at her lower lip, Sarah nodded. "It might take some doing, but I think I can manage it."

"Good," Billy said. "Wear dark clothes, and bring a flashlight. And make sure no one sees you leave!"

II

The night was filled with the chirring sound of crickets. Overhead, stars sprinkled the sky like powder. A crescent moon rose low in the east. The ground beneath her feet was lost in darkness as Sarah cut across the neighbors' yards between her house and

Billy's. She didn't dare chance walking down the road where a neighbor driving by or glancing out a window might see her. She was wearing a thin jacket against the chill, and in her hand she gripped a flashlight she had taken from the glove compartment of her father's truck. Summer-tall grass whisked at her legs, soaking her cuffs with dew and sending a thin chill up her legs.

All of the lights were off at Billy's house as she approached it from the side. A faint current of fear raced through her as she looked at the dark, silent house. Her parents had stayed up a little later than usual, and she knew she was at least fifteen minutes late.

...What if Billy had given up on her coming and already gone back to bed?

...or what if he had decided to go out to the Laymon house alone?

...Or--most likely, she thought--what if he was off hiding somewhere in the trees just behind the house, just waiting to give her a scare?

"Psst! Hey--Billy!" she whispered, looking back and forth along the length of the dark house. "You out here?"

The sound of the crickets went on undisturbed. From where she stood, she knew, if she turned around and looked, she might be able to see the Laymon house through the trees. Maybe she would see a light in the window, too. But as much as she wanted to look, she just couldn't bring herself to do it. If this was one of Billy's half-assed jokes, he might already be up there at the old house, shining a light in the window to lure her. And now that she thought about it, maybe rotten old Johnny, her little brother, was in on this, too. Come to think of it, he had gone off to bed tonight without too much complaint; none of his usual fussing about wanting to stay up to watch Johnny Carson.

"Damn you, Billy," she muttered, stamping her foot angrily against the ground.

"Huh--? What's the matter?"

Coming so suddenly out of the darkness, his voice sounded less than an inch from her ear. Stifling a scream, she wheeled around just as Bill came toward her around the side of the house.

"You scared the crap out of me!" Sarah said, her voice ragged from her repressed shout.

"Keep it down," Billy whispered, signalling her with a wave of his hand and then pointing

upward. "My parents' bedroom window is right there."

Without another word, Billy turned and started across the back yard, keeping to the shadows of the trees cast by the thin moonlight. Within seconds he was lost from sight; but before following him, Sarah had to stand there a while longer, waiting for her heart to stop racing.

"Are you coming or not?" Billy whispered from the shadows. She could hear him, but could not see him.

For an instant, Sarah considered saying, No--I'm not coming! This whole thing is ridiculous.

Any way she looked at it, she was foolish to be following Billy to the Laymon house--or anywhere--at night. If the killer really was there, then they would both be in serious trouble. If he wasn't there...well, she would just have to steel her nerves against the inevitable scare Billy had planned for her. Finally, deciding that she had come too far to turn back now, she took off in the direction Billy had taken, across the yard, through the stand of trees, skirting the dirt road that led to the Laymon house.

In the dark, she tripped and stumbled in Billy's wake as they felt more than saw their way through the woods. Wind rustled the leaves overhead. The sound, as much as Sarah tried to resist the idea, reminded her of bones clicking together.

"Did you see the light out there again tonight?" she asked at one point when he stopped to let her catch up with him.

In the dark, she saw him nod. "Yeah--just before I snuck out of the house I saw it blink on and off a couple of times. Sorta like he was signalling someone." He peered through the darkness to where he could see the looming black bulk of the house through the black puffs of foliage. The abandoned house was no more than a darker stain against the black stain of the night.

"You're just trying to scare me," Sarah said, angry at herself for letting her teeth chatter as she said it.

"We'll see, we'll see," Billy replied. "Come on. I figure we can swing around and come up on the back of the house. That'll probably be safest."

They fought their way through a thicket of briars that bordered a small swamp. Both of them got their feet wet, and their sneakers

made soft, sucking sounds as they left the cover of the trees and crept, shoulder to shoulder, up the gentle slope behind the house.

Sarah's heartbeat sounded all the louder in her ears as they crouched at the crest of the slope behind the house. She couldn't repress a shiver as she glanced up at the Laymon house. She had never been this close to it even in daylight, and she was surprised at how big it looked, looming up against the night sky. The peaked roof glinted like metal in the moonlight, and the blank, glassless windows gaped like yawning mouths. Everything about the house was silent, dark, and dead. Her conviction that Billy was setting her up for some elaborate practical joke grew all the stronger.

"I figure we can try the cellar window nearest us," Billy said, pointing toward the foundation steeped in shadow. "I think that was the one where I saw the light."

"Don't you know?"

Billy grunted. "It's hard to tell. All we gotta do is check."

"I don't think I want to go any closer," Sarah whispered. It surprised her that, although she usually didn't even like Billy, she found such a strong measure of reassurance just being close to him. "There's noth--"

Before she could finish the word nothing, as if on cue, a light came on, illuminating the cellar window from the inside. A distorted rectangle of sickly yellow light spilled out onto the ground, showing in sharp detail the tangle of grass and weeds that grew there. The window was skimmed too thickly with dirt for either Billy or Sarah to see inside clearly.

"We've got to get closer," Billy whispered harshly. He shifted forward, preparing to scramble the rest of the way to the house, but he was checked by Sarah's hand tugging at his sleeve.

"you don't have to," she said, keeping her voice low, forcing herself not to let it waver. "I know exactly what you're up to here." Turning toward the house, she rose to her feet and, cupping her hands to her mouth, shouted, "Okay, Johnny--and probably Curt, too. You can come out now! Game's over!"

Suddenly, from behind, something hit her in the back of her knees. Her legs gave out, and she twisted as she came down, she crumpled to the ground. Billy's weight came down hard on her stomach and chest. The air

was forced out of her lungs in one big, burning burst. She wanted to scream and shout, but all she could manage was a breathless gasp.

"What--are you crazy?" Billy hissed, his mouth close to her ear.

Sarah struggled to get out from under him, but he worked his arms and legs to keep her pinned to the ground.

"You--just--get--off--me--right--now!" she said. Try as she might, she couldn't dislodge him by wiggling.

"You better hope to Christ he didn't hear you," Billy said. He had his head cocked up and was anxiously scanning the house. The dull glow from the window washed over his face, giving it a ghostly cast.

"You didn't fool me for a minute," Sarah managed to say now that Billy had shifted a little and she was able to draw a breath. "I know darn right well that my brother's in there, shining the light just so you can try to scare me. Well--it won't work."

"Ahh, but I think it will," a man's voice said, coming to her from the surrounding darkness. Sarah had no idea of the direction. "I think you will be scared...a lot."

Still unable to see, she heard steady footsteps approach from the side of the house. When he looked up, she saw the huge bulk of a man towering above her. He was almost featureless, no more than an inky silhouette against the starry sky.

"I want to thank you for bringing her to me, Billy," the man said, followed by a hollow laugh. "Now be a good boy 'n' help me get her into the cellar. You'll see what I like to do with people like her."

III

Sarah couldn't believe any of this was happening, but it was real; she knew that when she felt the man's strong hands slide under her and heave her up onto his shoulder as if she were a sack of grain. Her throat closed off; nothing more than a feeble squeak would come out as the man carried her around to the back of the house. Each step, like a soft fist in the stomach, took her breathe away. Pinpricks of light swam like comets in front of her eyes. The night song of crickets roared like the ocean in her ears.

"So, Billy-boy, this is your lucky night tonight, huh?" the man said. Before heading down the cellar stairs, he paused and turned

to look back at Billy. Sarah could see the faint light of a single candle washing the cellar floor and walls like a thin coat of paint.

Sarah's mind was like a transmission that had lost all of its teeth; it kept whining, louder and louder, but it just wouldn't catch on anything.

...Who is this man? And what is he doing? If the point was to scare me--all right, he and Billy had done it. The joke was over and done. They should just let me go home now. Why is he taking me down into the cellar?

These and other questions roared through her mind like a funnel of wind. There was no answer, but Sarah knew that it was going beyond a joke; she knew she was in serious trouble when the man unslung her from his shoulder and dropped her roughly to the floor. She hit hard; a jolt of pain as bright as lightning ran up her spine. Her chest ached, and she still couldn't get enough air into her lungs to scream as she watched the man stand back from her, fold his arms across his chest, and smile menacingly. The faint sounds of other footsteps on the cellar stairs made her look around, but her heart sank when she saw that it was just Billy.

"Just what--are you trying--trying to do?" Sarah said between gasps. Her question was directed at Billy, who was cowering in the dark corner by the cellar door, but it was the man who answered her.

"we're not trying to do anything." The man's voice was low; it boomed like distant thunder. "We've done it. Billy, here, has been helping me out over the last few days...since I broke out of prison."

"You mean...?"

Knowing what the rest of the question was, the man chuckled and nodded. "You must've read about me in the paper, or seen me on T.V."

Sarah's eyes felt as if they were bulging six inches out of her face as she stared up at Billy. He cringed in the shadowed corner; the feeble light of the candle made his shadow dance and weave. She couldn't begin to accept that Billy had set her up for this, and her blood ran cold when she imagined what might happen next.

"You didn't happen to bring that food you promised, did you, Billy-boy?" the man asked. He never once took his eyes off Sarah as he spoke.

"No, I--uh, I couldn't bring it when I was coming out with her," he replied, his voice sounding thin and weak. "I mean, she would have suspected something was up."

"I been gettin' kind of hungry, Billy-boy," the man said. He shot Billy a quick, angry glance, then turned back to Sarah, who was pressing herself back against the cold stone wall.

"Then again," the man went on, "I always was a business before pleasure man." With that, he reached behind his back and quickly snapped his hand out in front of him. Held tightly in his right hand was a thick bladed knife, at least six inches long. The blade glinted wickedly in the candle light as the man turned it back and forth admiringly.

"You...what are...you?" Sarah's mind was nothing more than a black blur as she stared, horrified at the knife.

This is going too far! her mind screamed. This man isn't kidding! This isn't just some practical joke! He means it!

"Billy...?" she said, no more than a whimper.

"Billy-boy ain't gonna help you, little girl," the man said. He took one slow step toward her, the knife weaving in front of him in a big figure-8. "Oh, no. Billy-boy's the one who brought you to me. He's the one who said he wouldn't mind if I carved you up. Ain't that right Billy-boy?"

Wide-eyed and trembling, Billy nodded agreement.

"You see, little girl?" the man said. "Billy-boy discovered me here, 'n'...well, my first recourse was to waste him. I couldn't very well have him blabbing about the escaped convict living up here in this deserted house, now, could I? But before I gutted him, we worked out a little deal, don't you see? He would bring me food so I could hole up here until I figured out where to go next. And then, just yesterday, we started talking 'bout what I was put in jail for. Right, Billy-boy?"

"I can't believe you're doing this to me!" Sarah yelled at Billy. Her chest still felt like it was bound with steel bands, but the horror of her situation fueled her anger.

"Oh, Billy-boy ain't gonna do a thing," the man said, taking another step closer. "He told me he just wants to watch. That was our deal."

He laughed a deep, watery laugh as he came closer to Sarah and leaned down so the

knife was level with her face.

Sarah's hands and feet were scrambling wildly on the floor, but the solid granite blocks stopped further retreat. It took several seconds for her brain to register that her right hand was wrist deep in some gritty-feeling stuff, either sand or crumbled mortar; but once she realized it, she acted quickly. Grabbing as big a handful as she could, she flung it straight into the man's face.

In the split second the man was staggering back in surprise, Sarah coiled up her legs and jumped to her feet. She was running full speed for the cellar stairs when she heard the man shout behind her, sounding inches from her ear.

"Stop her!"

In a blur, Sarah saw Billy come at her. She felt his hand snag the loose flap of her jacket. With a shriek, she turned and swatted at his hand, but he held on tightly as she dragged him toward the doorway out.

"Don't let her get away!" the man bellowed.

Sarah could hear the man stumbling toward her. Panic whined in her ears like a power drill. She was just starting to think all was lost; she wasn't going to get away, but then she heard the harsh whisper of tearing cloth. The backward pulling pressure suddenly let go, and she stumbled forward. Her shins slammed into the bottom step, but she quickly regained her balance and leaped up the stairs and out into the night. Not waiting to see how close her pursuers were, she tightened her fists into balls and ran down the dirt road, screaming as loud as she could.

IV

"You let her get away, Billy-boy!" the man shouted as he watched, eyes still stinging, Sarah disappear up the stairs and into the night. He moved over to where Billy stood, helplessly dangling in one hand the piece torn from Sarah's jacket.

"Do you realize how much of a problem this is going to cause?"

Billy wasn't able to keep eye contact with the man, so he looked down at his scuffed, dew-soaked sneakers. "I'm--I'm sorry, he muttered. "She was moving so fast."

The man walked over to the cellar doorway, and it was with a sudden sinking

feeling that Billy registered the man stood between him and the night.

"This blows it all for me, though, Billy-boy," the man hissed. "I had a nice set-up here, and now, sure as shit, she's gonna have the cops down on this place in a matter of minutes."

Billy took a shuddering breath, wishing he could edge his way over to the door.

"I'm sorry I didn't get that food to you," Billy said. His voice was constricted so tightly, he sounded like a girl.

"I wouldn't worry 'bout that," the man said.

Billy couldn't help but notice that he hadn't put his knife away. Shouldn't he start gathering his few things so he could get out of there before the police showed up?

"I'm just sorry you didn't get to see what you came for," the man said, his voice smooth as honey. He came up close to Billy and placed his hand gently, almost lovingly on Billy's shoulder. The fingertips dug into his shoulder just enough to hurt.

"Course, we can take care of that before I take off, now, can't we?"

With that, he snagged Billy by the wrist and roughly jerked him around so his arm was pinned up between his shoulder blades. A jolt of pain ran up to the base of Billy's neck, but that was nothing compared to the fear that surged through his body when he realized what was about to happen.

"Now, I realize we could do this a damn site better if we had a mirror or something," the man whispered. His breath was hot on the back of Billy's neck. From the corner of his eyes, Billy saw the six-inch blade come around in front of him.

"Now, lookee here, Billy-boy," the man hissed. "This is what it looks like."

The blade drove into Billy's stomach with a quick, tearing slice. Surprisingly, Billy felt no pain as he watched the man's wrist drag the knife against the rubbery resistance of his stomach walls. Blood poured out and over the man's hand. When Billy's legs started to give way beneath him, the man jerked him back up. The knife was buried to the hilt in Billy's gut as the wound opened wide and his guts spilled out onto the cellar floor, uncoiling like wet, heavy ropes.

"Don't go passin' out on me now, Billy-boy," the man rasped. "I don't have much time. You gotta see what you came to see."

GORE SHRIEK ACTION WEAR!



Gore Shriek 1



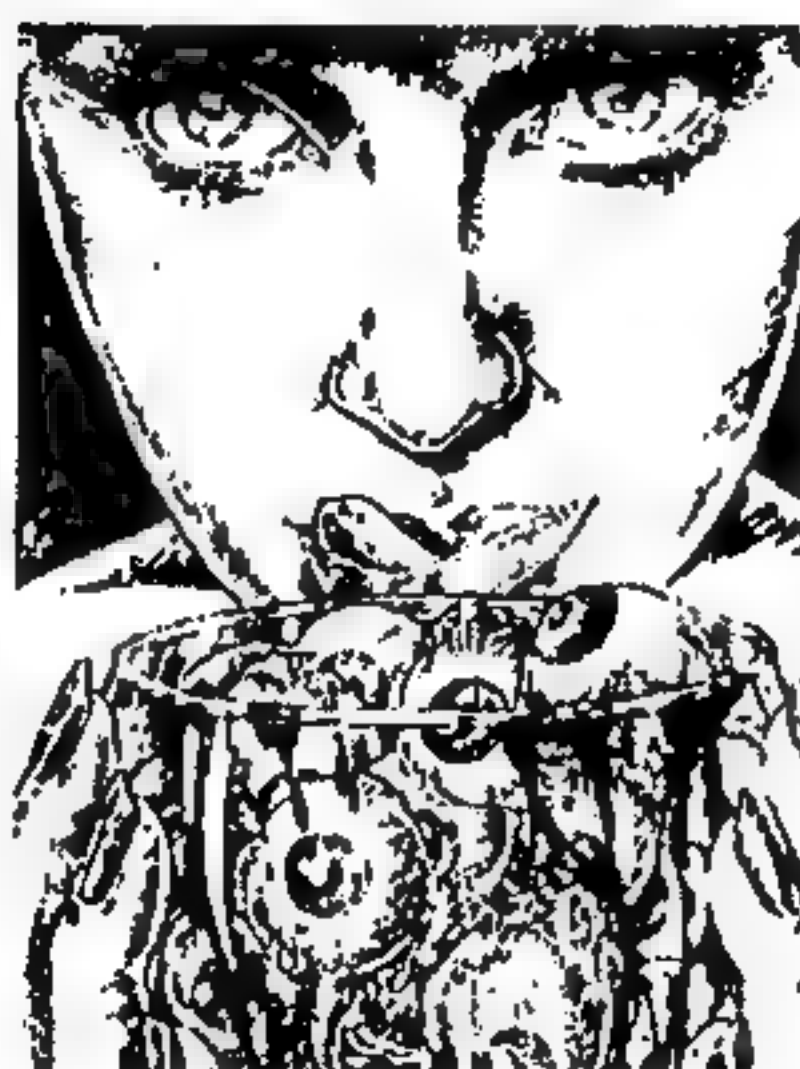
Gore Shriek 2



Gore Shriek 3



Gore Shriek 4



Gore Shriek 5



Gore Shriek 6

**ALL SHIRTS
ARE
PRINTED ON
HIGH
QUALITY
BLACK
GARMENTS**



Gore Shriek Sweatshirt 1

**ALL SHIRTS
FEATURE
THE GORE
SHRIEK
LOGO AND
WARNING
ON BACK**

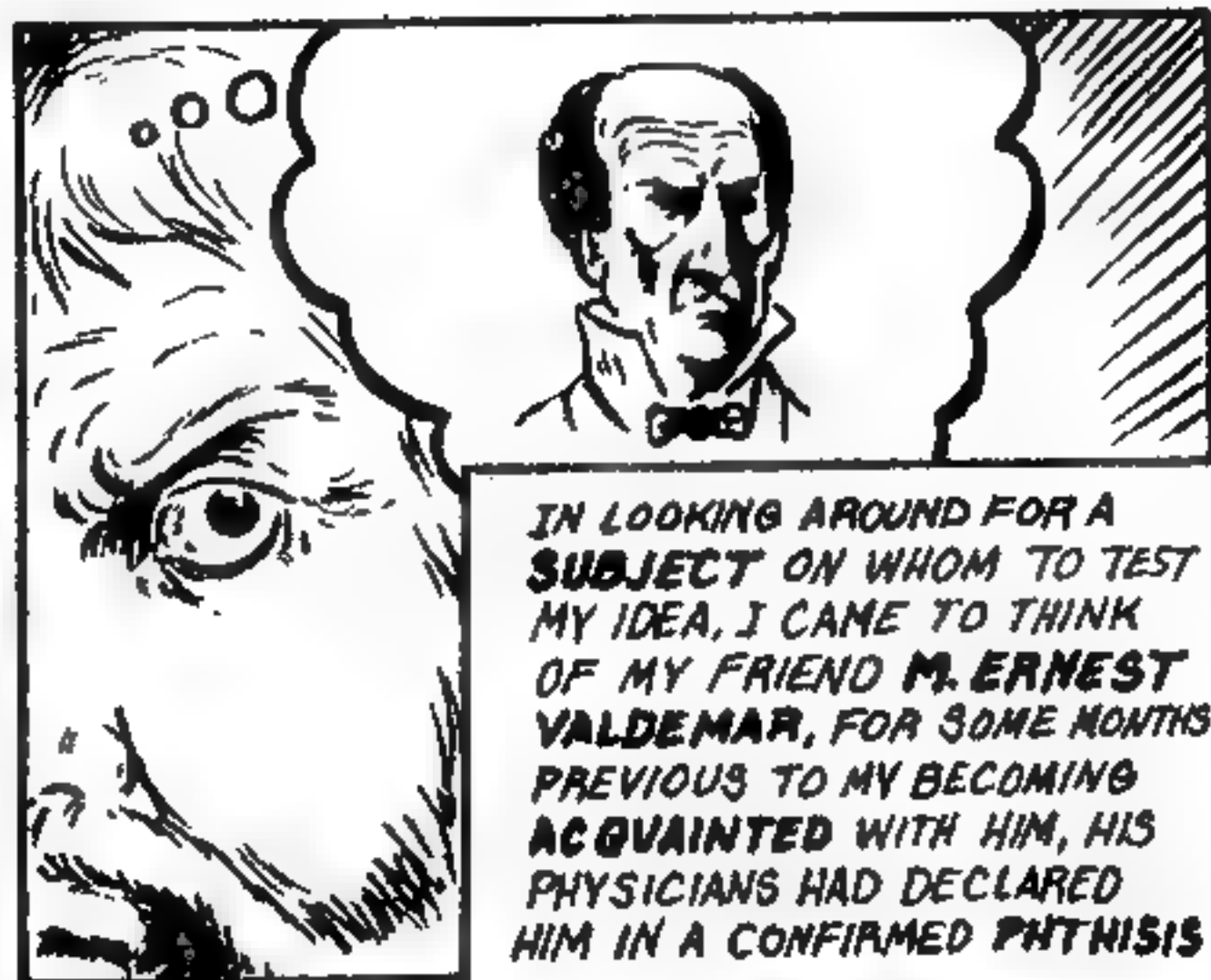
**THESE ITEMS AND MANY MORE CAN BE
FOUND IN THE BACK OF THIS BOOK!**



MY ATTENTION, FOR THE LAST THREE YEARS, HAD BEEN REPEATEDLY DRAWN TO THE SUBJECT OF MESMERISM, ONE NIGHT, AS I WAS GATHERING NOTES, IT OCCURRED TO ME, QUITE SUDDENLY, THAT ON THE SERIES OF EXPERIMENTS MADE ON THE MATTER, NO PERSON HAD AS YET BEEN MESMERIZED IN "ARTICULO MORTIS."

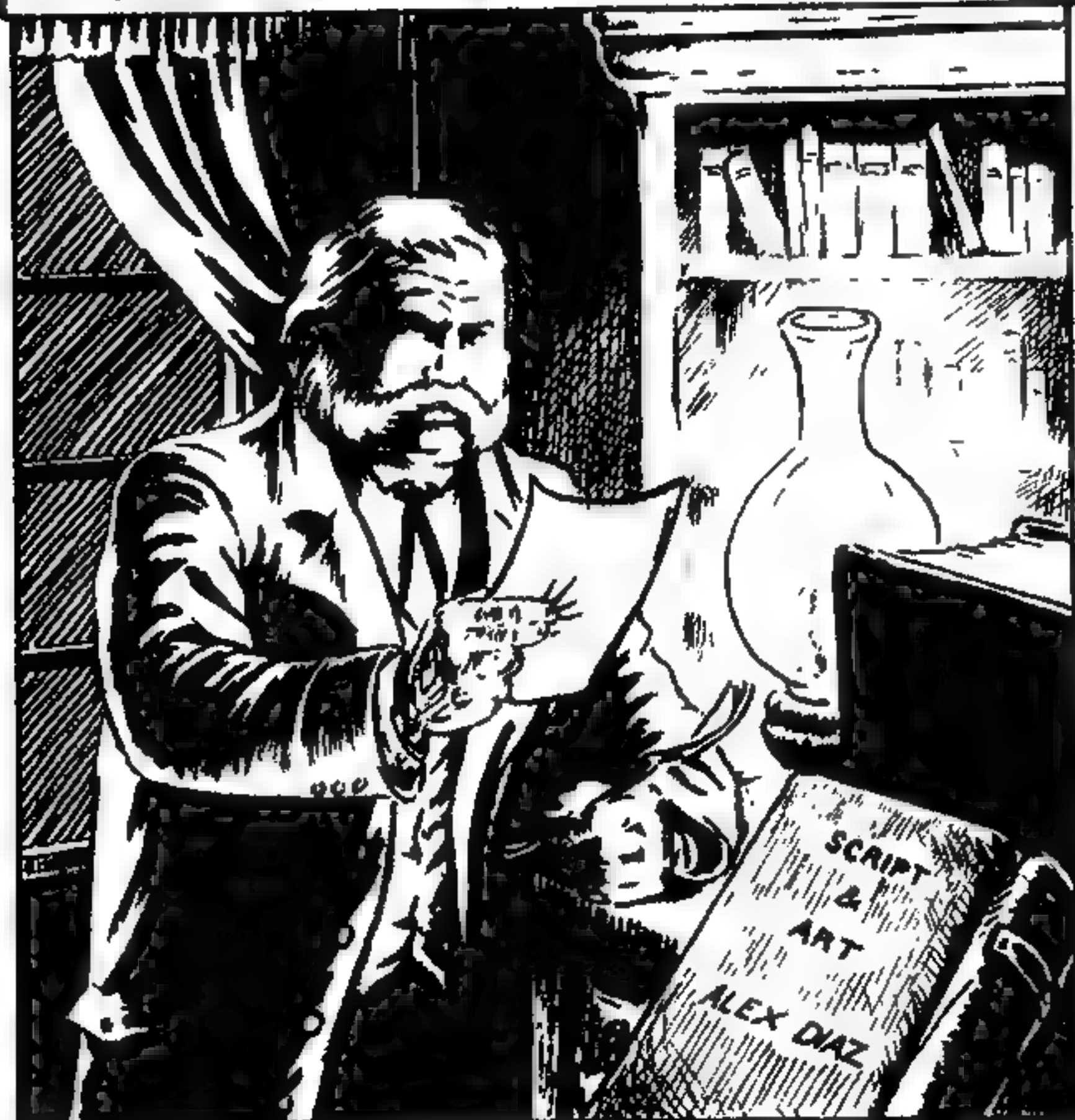
Edgar Allan Poe's THE FACTS IN THE CASE OF M. VALDEMAR

IT REMAINED TO BE SEEN, WHETHER, IN SUCH CONDITION, THERE EXISTED IN THE PATIENT ANY SUCCEPTIBILITY TO THE MAGNETIC INFLUENCE, AND IF ANY EXISTED, IT WAS IMPAIRED OR INCREASED BY THE CONDITION, AND MORE IMPORTANT, TO WHAT EXTENT OR FOR HOW LONG A PERIOD, THE PROCESS OF DEATH COULD BE DELAYED.



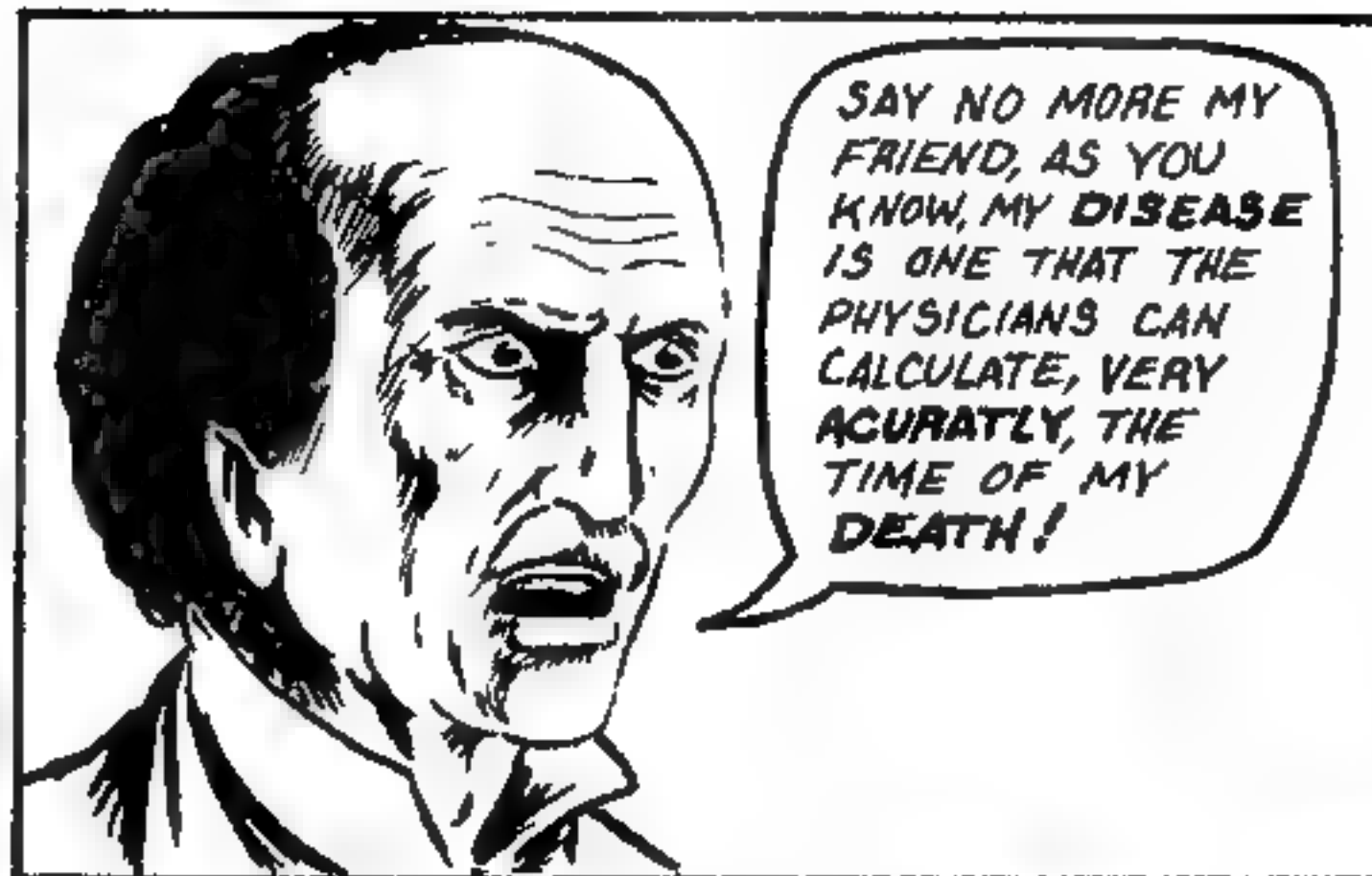
IN LOOKING AROUND FOR A SUBJECT ON WHOM TO TEST MY IDEA, I CAME TO THINK OF MY FRIEND M. ERNEST VALDEMAR, FOR SOME MONTHS PREVIOUS TO MY BECOMING ACQUAINTED WITH HIM, HIS PHYSICIANS HAD DECLARED HIM IN A CONFIRMED PHTHISIS

I DECIDED TO VISIT HIM THE NEXT DAY.



I SPOKE TO HIM FRANKLY UPON THE SUBJECT AND HE SEAMED VIVIDLY INTERESTED.

...AND I WAS WONDERING
IF YOU COULD BE INTERESTED
IN TAKING PART ON THE
EXPERIMENT.



SAY NO MORE MY
FRIEND, AS YOU
KNOW, MY DISEASE
IS ONE THAT THE
PHYSICIANS CAN
CALCULATE, VERY
ACURATLY, THE
TIME OF MY
DEATH!

IT'LL BE INTERESTING TO SEE,
IF ANY, THE RESULT OF THE
EXPERIMENT...

I'LL SEND FOR YOU AT
LEAST TWENTY
FOUR HOURS
PRIOR TO MY
DECEASE!



TWO MONTHS LATER I RECEIVED THE
FOLLOWING NOTE ..

my dear friend:
You may as well
come now, my physi-
cians have agreed that
I can not hold out be-
yond tomorrow, and I
think they hit the
time very nearly.
Valdemar

WITHIN FIFTEEN MINUTES I WAS IN
THE DYING MAN'S CHAMBER.

I CAME AS SOON
AS I GOT YOUR
MESSAGE, MY FRIEND!

I'M PLEASED
YOU ARE
HERE...



I TOOK THE DOCTORS
ASIDE TO GET INFOR-
MATION ABOUT HIS
CONDITION.



WE CAN ASSURE YOU
HE WON'T LIVE PAST
TOMORROW MIDNIGHT!

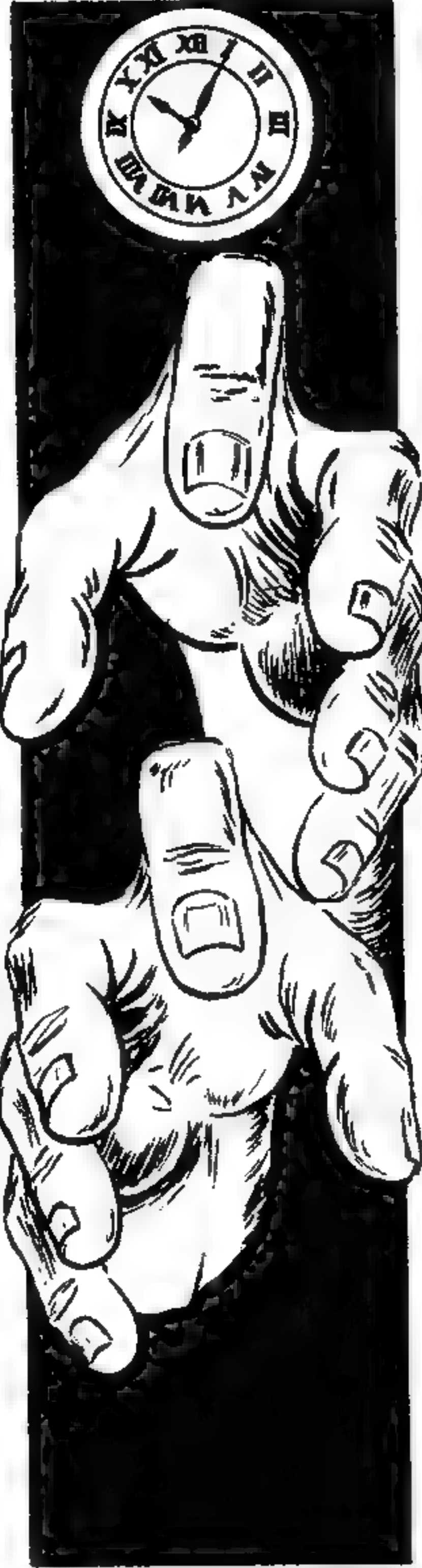
WE RETURNED, AS AGREED,
THE NEXT NIGHT AROUND
EIGHT.



ARE YOU, STILL, WILLING
TO PARTICIPATE IN
THE EXPERIMENT?

YES, I WISH TO BE
MESMERIZED, BUT
I FEAR YOU HAVE
DEFERRED IT TO
LONG..

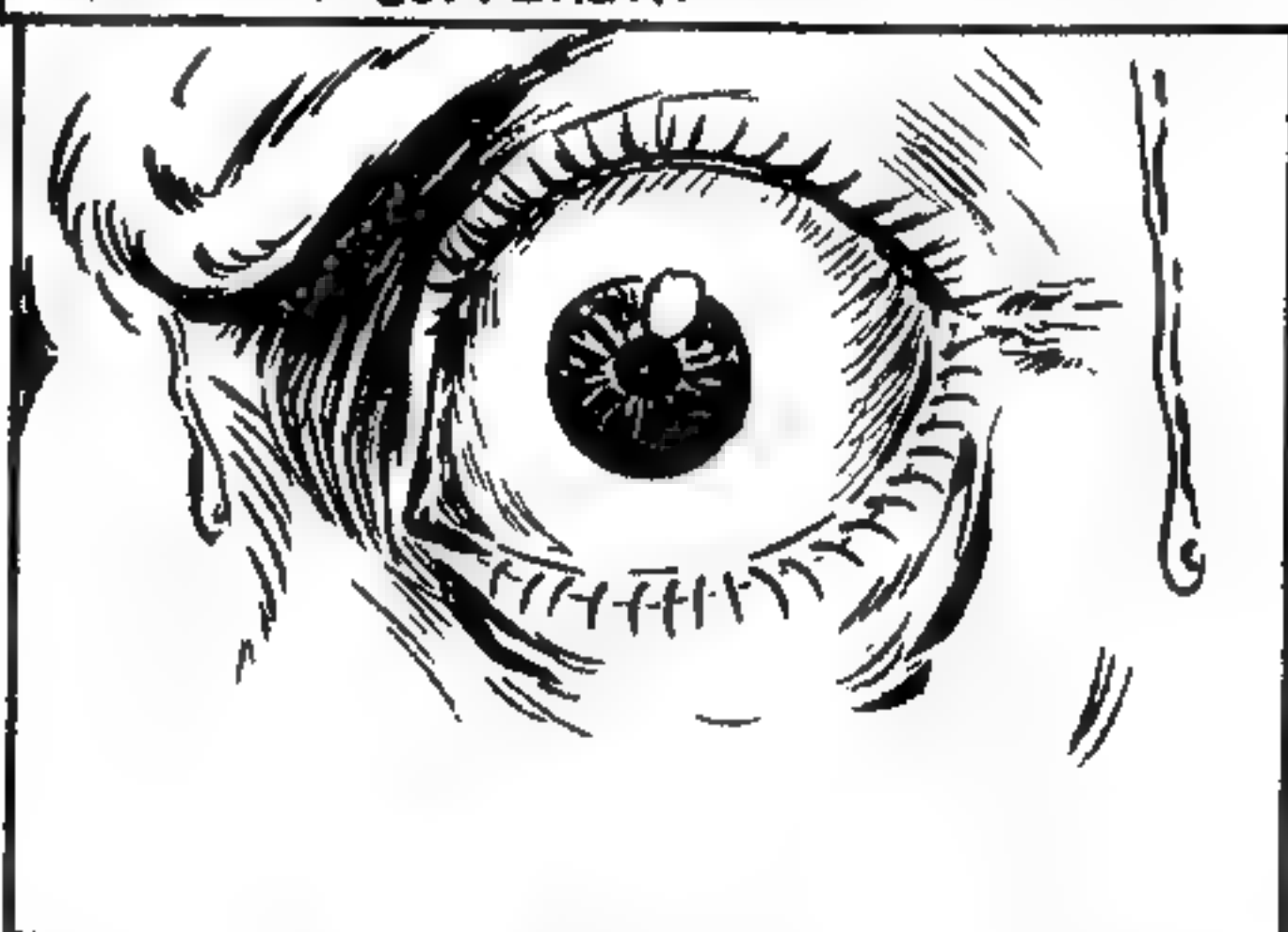
WHILE HE SPOKE, I COM-
MENCED THE PASSES WITH
I HAD FOUND MOST EFFEC-
TUAL IN SUBDUING HIM.



AT FIVE MINUTES BEFORE ELEVEN
I PERCEIVED UNEQUIVOCAL SIGNS
OF MESMERIC INFLUENCE.



I WAS NOT SATISFIED HOWEVER, WITH THIS, BUT
CONTINUE THE MANIPULATIONS VIGOROUSLY,
DIRECTING MY GAZE ENTIRELY INTO THE RIGHT
EYE OF THE SUFFERER.



BY MIDNIGHT, I REQUESTED THE
PHYSICIANS TO EXAMINE HIM.



HIS EXTREMITIES ARE
AS COLD AS MARBLE
BUT HE IS, WITH NO
DOUBT, UNDER MESMERIC
TRANCE!

WE LEFT M. VALDEMAR UNDISTURBED UNTIL ABOUT
THREE IN THE MORNING, WHEN I APPROACHED HIM
AGAIN, DETERMINED TO HAZARD A FEW WORDS OF
CONVERSATION.



M. VALDEMAR, ARE
YOU ASLEEP?

FINALLY, AT THE THIRD REPETITION
OF THE QUESTION, HE SPOKE.

YES, ASLEEP NOW,
DO NOT WAKE ME
LET ME DIE SO!



DO YOU STILL FEEL
PAIN IN THE CHEST
M. VALDEMAR?



NO PAIN, I AM
DYING!



A LITTLE BEFORE SUNRISE,
I APPROACHED HIM AGAIN



M. VALDEMAR
DO YOU STILL
SLEEP?

THERE WAS NO ANSWER FROM
THE SLEEP-WAKER.



M. VALDEMAR, DO
YOU STILL SLEEP?

YES, STILL
ASLEEP,
DYING.

A FEW MINUTES LATER
I NOTICED A CHANGE
IN HIS FEATURES...



AFTER GETTING THE
OPINION OF THE PHY-
SICIANS, I CONCLU-
DED TO SPEAK TO
HIM ONCE MORE, BUT
MERELY REPEATED
MY PREVIOUS QUESTION.



M. VALDEMAR,
DO YOU STILL
SLEEP?

AFTER A PAUSE, IT WAS MORE
LIKE A SOUND NOT A VOICE, WHAT
CAME OUT OF HIM, SOMETHING
OF AN DISTANT AND UNEARTH-
LY PECULIARITY



NO... I AM NOT
SLEEPING ANYMORE,
NOW... NOW I AM
DEAD!

NONE OF US ATTEMPTED TO REPRESS THE UNUTTERABLE, SHUDDERING HORROR THAT THESE WORDS WERE ABLE TO CONVEY, WE REMAINED SILENT UNTILL TEN O'CLOCK, WHEN WE DECIDED TO GET SOME REST AND LEFT THE HOUSE.

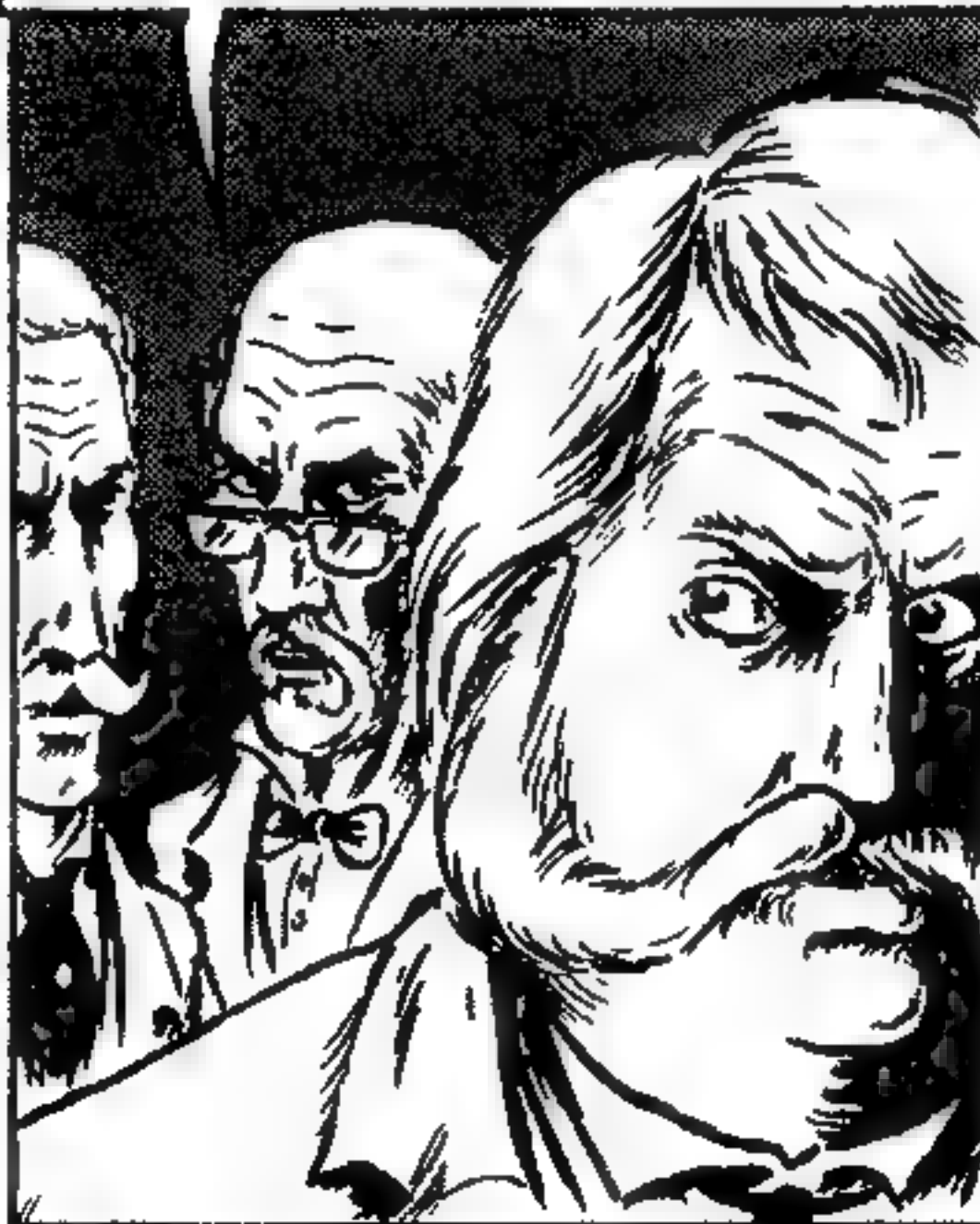


IN THE AFTERNOON WE ALL CALLED AGAIN TO SEE THE PATIENT, HIS CONDITION REMAINED PRECISELY THE SAME.



MY GOD, WHAT A HORRIBLE STENCH!

IT'S EVIDENT THAT, SO FAR, DEATH, OR WHAT IS USUALLY TERMED DEATH, HAS BEEN ARRESTED BY THE MESMERIC PROCESS, IT SEEMS CLEAR TO US, THAT TO AWAKEN M. VALDEMAR WOULD BE MERELY TO INSURE HIS INSTANT OR AT LEAST HIS SPEEDY, DISSOLUTION!



FOR A PERIOD OF SEVEN MONTHS WE CONTINUED TO MAKE DAILY CALLS AT M. VALDEMAR'S HOUSE.



ALL THIS TIME THE PATIENT REMAINED EXACTLY THE SAME.

IT WAS ON FRIDAY LAST THAT WE FINALLY RESOLVED TO MAKE THE EXPERIMENT OF AWAKENING, OR ATTEMPTING TO AWAKEN HIM...



I MADE USE OF THE CUSTOMARY PASSES

SUDDENLY...



FOR GOD'S SAKE! QUICK!
PUT ME TO SLEEP OR
QUICK!... WAKEN ME!...
I SAY TO YOU THAT
I AM

DEAD!



I WAS THOROUGHLY UNNERVED, AND FOR AN INSTANT REMAINED UNDECIDED WHAT TO DO, THEN I STRUGGLED TO AWAKEN HIM

I SOON SAW THAT I SHOULD BE SUCCESSFUL!



FOR WHAT OCCURRED NEXT, HOWEVER, IT'S QUITE IMPOSSIBLE THAT ANY HUMAN BEING COULD HAVE BEEN PREPARED!





**THE
OFFICIAL**

SCORERTM SHRIEK

**CHECK
LIST**

Volume 1 #1

Artists: Bruce Spaulding Fuller, Greg Capullo, Steve Bissette
Writers: Kevin McReavy, Bruce Spaulding Fuller, Bill Townsend, Steve Bissette
Cover: Bruce Spaulding Fuller
The one that started it all, and still our most popular cover image.

Volume 1 #2

Artists: Bruce Spaulding Fuller, Rolf Stark, Greg Capullo
Writers: Rolf Stark, Bill Townsend
Cover: Bruce Spaulding Fuller

The first appearance in comics of the nightmare visions of Rolf Stark.

Volume 1 #3

Artists: Bruce Spaulding Fuller, Chas. Balun, Greg Capullo, Rolf Stark
Writers: Chas. Balun, Bill Townsend, Rolf Stark, Bruce Spaulding Fuller
Cover: Chas. Balun

Features Chas. Balun's "Moana Lisa" on back cover.

Volume 1 #4

Artists: Steve Bissette, Bruce Spaulding Fuller, Rolf Stark, Greg Capullo
Writers: Steve Bissette, Augustus Mattick II, Henry J. Jansen III, Tom Skulan, Rolf Stark, Marlene Stevens; text article by Steve Bissette
Cover: Greg Capullo (color by Bruce Spaulding Fuller)
Mars Attacks preview. This rare out of print issue has sold for as much as \$20

Volume 1 #5

Artists: Bruce Spaulding Fuller, Steve Bissette, Rick McCollum, Bill Anderson, Chris Pelletiere, Chas. Balun, David Marshall
Writers: Rick McCollum, Chris Pelletiere, David Marshall; text articles by Archie Goodwin, Tom Veitch, and Stan Wiater
Cover: Bruce Spaulding Fuller

Volume 1 #6

Artists: Michael Dubisch, Gary Crutchley, Ben Dilworth, Gurchain Singh, Rolf Stark, Steve Bissette
Writers: Michael Dubisch, Gary Crutchley, David Hern, Steve Bissette; text articles by Jack Butterworth, Tom Veitch, and Stan Wiater
Cover: Bruce Spaulding Fuller

In addition to the publications listed below, FantaCo Enterprises has released six T-shirts and a sweatshirt (which can be seen elsewhere in this issue), as well as a beverage mug bearing the screaming head from Volume 1 #1. Bruce Spaulding Fuller published a limited edition portfolio which is now extremely scarce. Future planned releases include more shirts and mugs, a huge screaming head wall poster and, of course, more issues of Gore Shriek!

Delectus

Artists: Bruce Spaulding Fuller, Greg Capullo, Rolf Stark, Steve Bissette, Michael Dubisch, Chas. Balun
 Writers: Tom Skulan, Rolf Stark, Bill Townsend, Bruce Spaulding Fuller, Steve Bissette, Greg Capullo,
 Some of the best stories from issues 1-4; Rolf Stark paintings front and back.



Volume 1 #6 1/2

Artists: Gurchain Singh, Eric Stanaway, Rolf Stark, David MacDowell
 Writers: Eric Stanway, Rolf Stark, David MacDowell
 Cover: Gurchain Singh
 This half-size special issue is available exclusively through FantaCo Enterprises, as an extra shot of horror to loyal fans.



Volume 2 #1

Artists: Gurchain Singh, Chas. Balun, Steve Bissette, Eric Stanway, Bruce Spaulding Fuller
 Writers: Gurchain Singh, Charles Dickens (yes, THE Charles Dickens!)
 Cover: Gurchain Singh
 Special Night of the Living Dead section by Steve Bissette.



Volume 2 #2

Artists: Chas Balun, Gurchain Singh, Eric Stanway, Mike Dubisch
 Writers: Robert Louis Stevenson, Gurchain Singh; text article by Anthony Timpone
 Cover: Bruce Spaulding Fuller



Volume 2 # 2 1/2

"A special issue devoted exclusively to the unique visions of Mr. Gurchain Singh"

Composed entirely of full page illustrations by "The Gurch".



Annual #1

Artists: Landon McDonald, G. Singh, D. MacDowell, E. Stanway, M. Dubisch, Alex Diaz, R. Stark, Eric Talbot, C. Pelletiere, Mark Martin, Gary Crutchley, Ben Dilworth, R. McCollum, B. Anderson, Chris Przygodzki, Wendy Snow-Lang
 Writers: L. McDonald, G. Singh, D. MacDowell, E. Stanway, Ambrose Bierce, M. Dubisch, Rick Hautala, A. Diaz, Edgar Allen Poe, C. Pelletiere, M. Martin, Dave Henney, R. McCollum, G. Crutchley
 Cover: Allen Koszowski





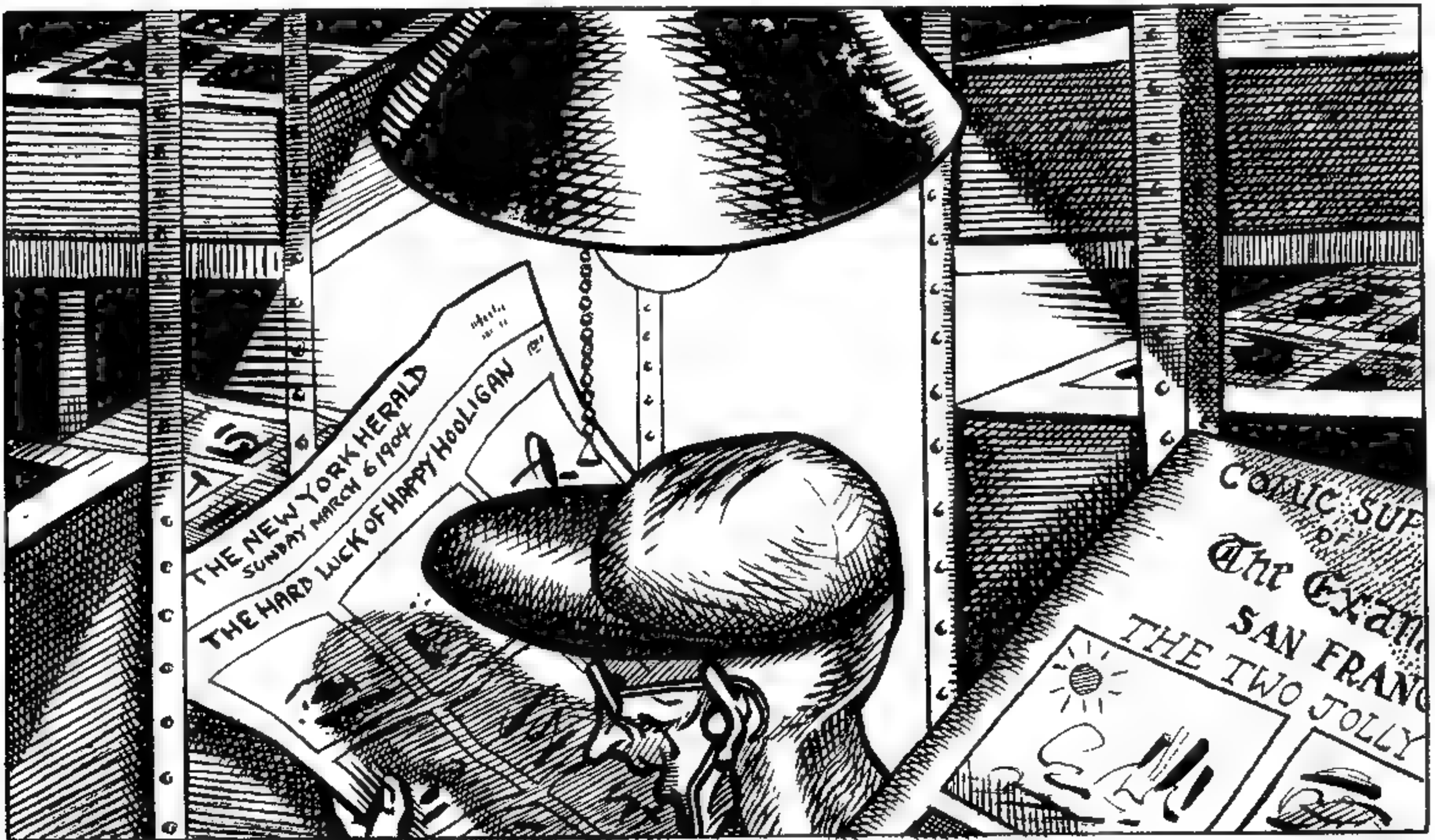
WANT SOME
CANDY?

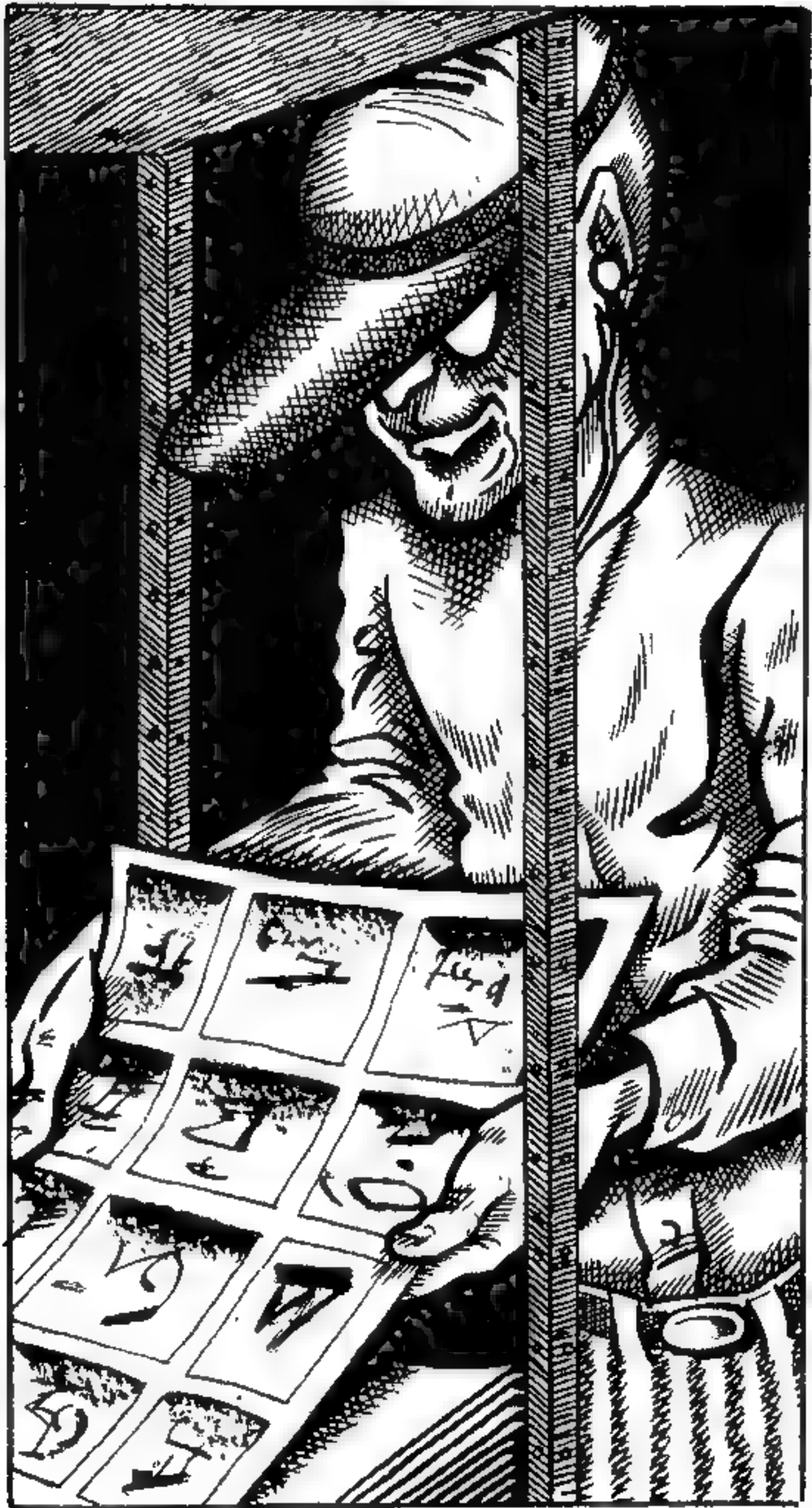


THE FUNNY FARM

INSPIRED BY THE STORY BY ROBERT BLOCH

PELLETIERE © 1990







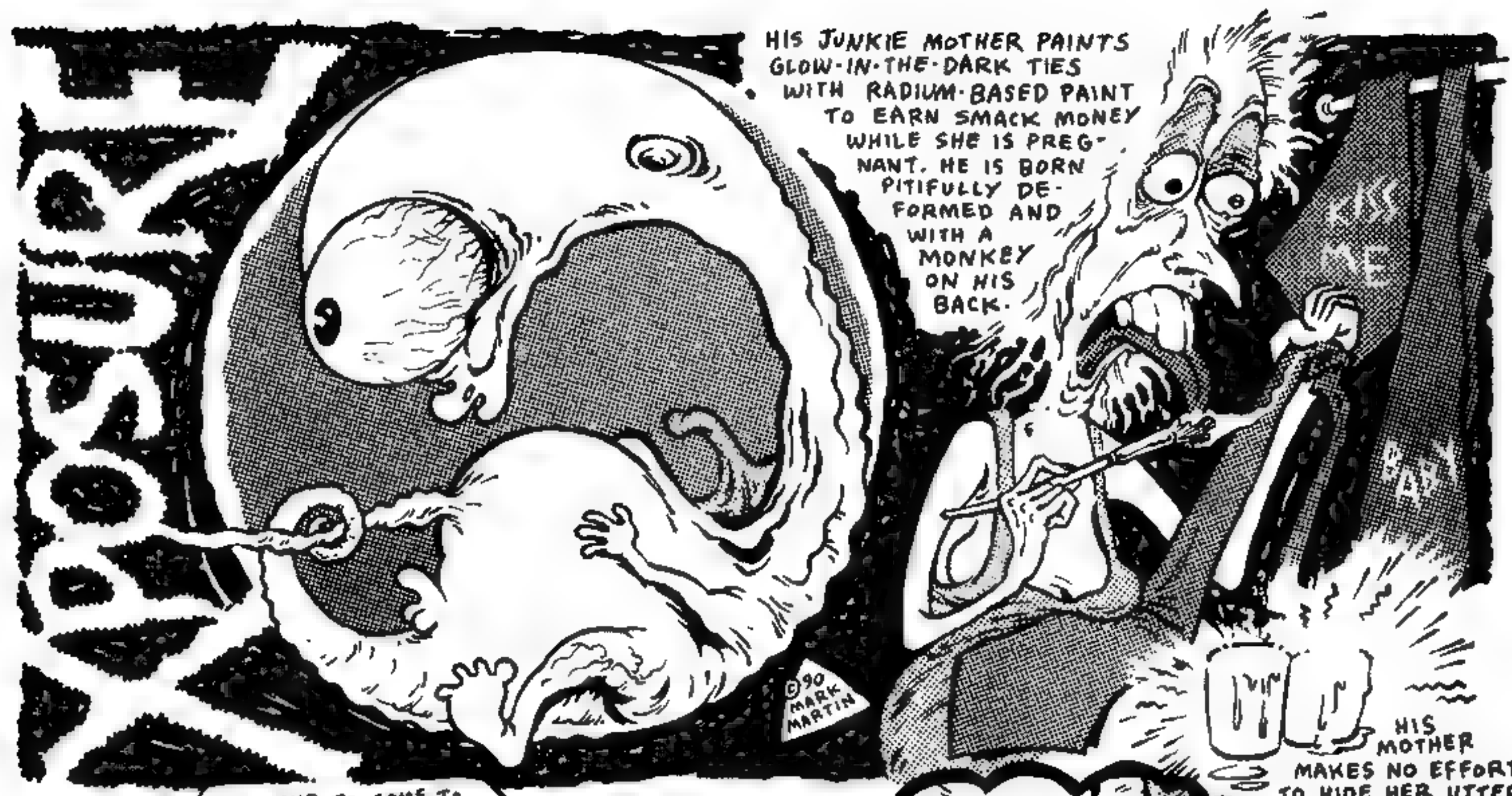








END



HIS JUNKIE MOTHER PAINTS GLOW-IN-THE-DARK TIES WITH RADIUM-BASED PAINT TO EARN SMACK MONEY WHILE SHE IS PREGNANT. HE IS BORN PITIFULLY DEFORMED AND WITH A MONKEY ON HIS BACK.

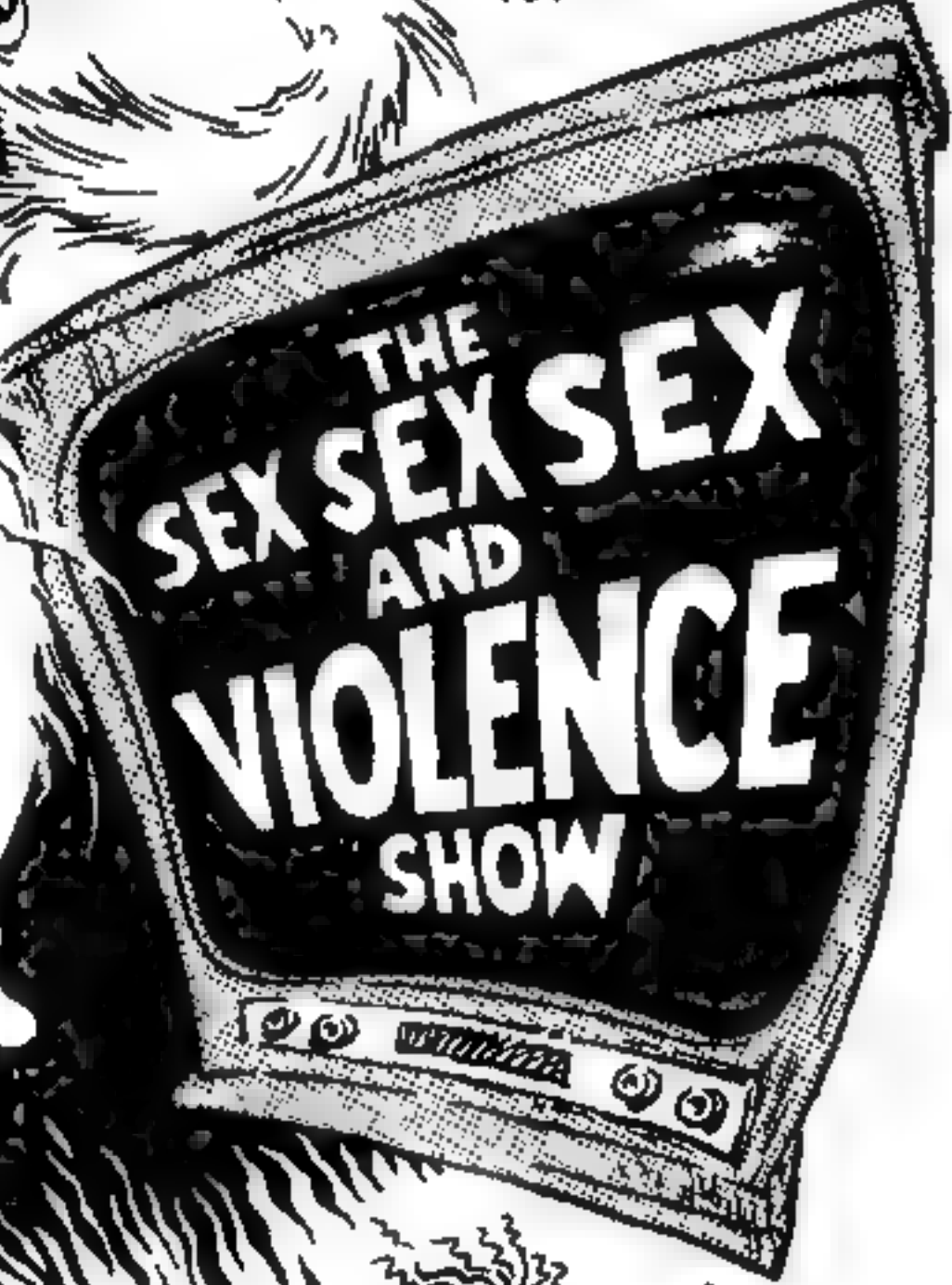
©90 MARK MARTIN

HIS MOTHER MAKES NO EFFORT TO HIDE HER UTTER CONTEMPT FOR HIM. EVEN AS AN INFANT, THESE "VIBES" PENETRATE HIS SUBCONCIOUS MIND, AND HIS LOW SELF-IMAGE IS FORMED.

I'D LOVE TO COME TO YOUR CRACK PARTY, BUT UNFORTUNATELY I HAVE TO STAY HERE WITH THE LITTLE GEEK TONIGHT!



HE IS LEFT ALONE WITH THE T.V. FOR HOURS ON END WHILE MOTHER "BRINGS HOME THE BACON"

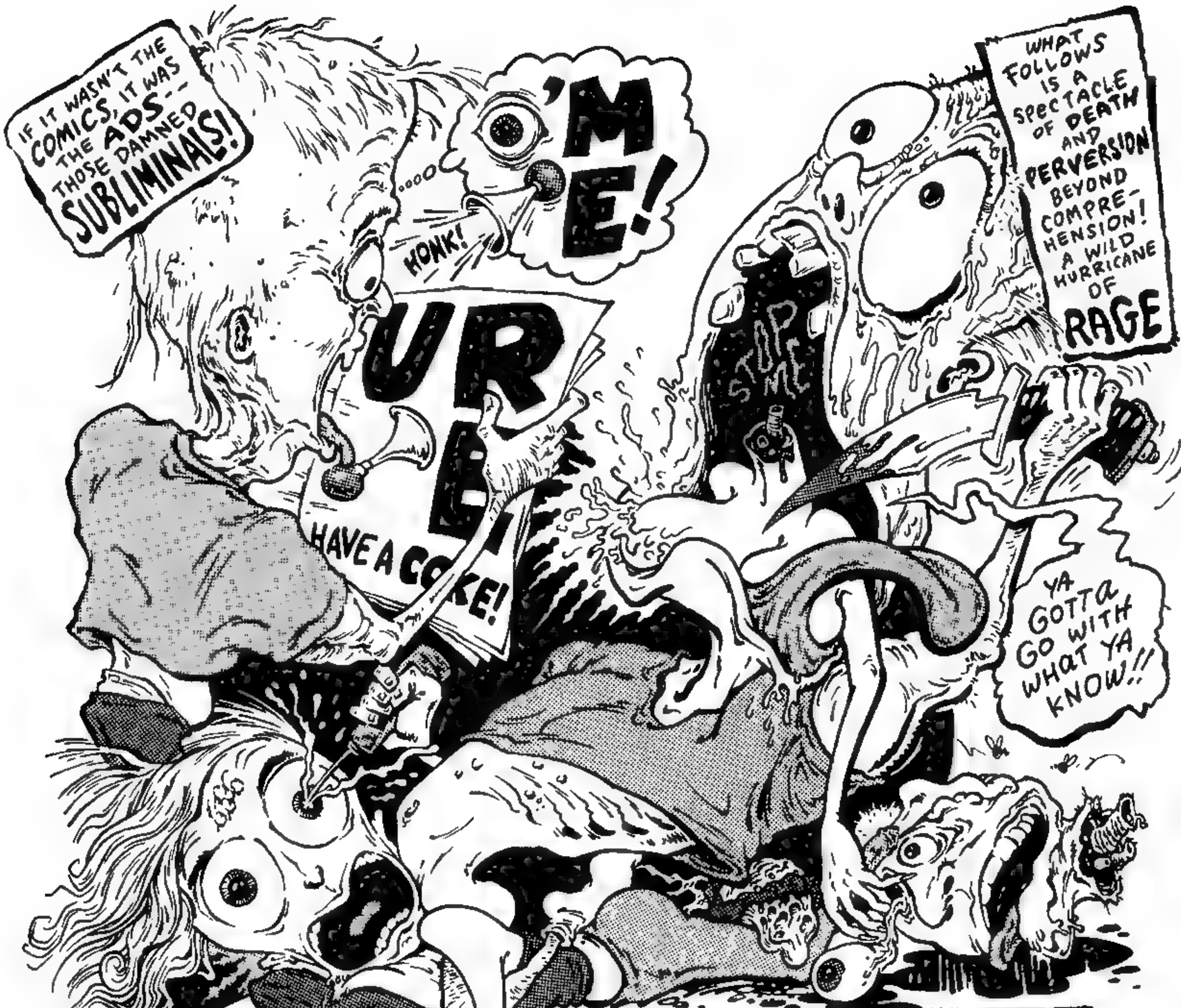


I WANT YOUR BODY! I WANT TO PLAY HOOKIE FROM CHURCH AND MURDER A COP AND THEN HAVE SEX WITH A COW



HE LOOKS AT COMIC BOOKS WHILE MOM BOOGIE WOOGIES TO ROCK 'N ROLL!





THE U.S. GOVERNMENT ATTEMPTS TO BRAINWASH THE PUBLIC. A SERIES OF SECRET MESSAGES IS ENCODED INTO THE 1991 SUPER BOWL. OUR IMPRESSIONABLE BUDDY BREAKS THE CODE BY THE MIDDLE OF THE

-AND IT'S A TOUCHDOWN!

GUARD! HE JUST SAID "WE LOVE NEAL BUSH!"

FIRST QUARTER!



TWO DAYS BEFORE HE IS SCHEDULED TO BE ASSASSINATED BY AN "UNKNOWN GUNMAN" HE DIES FROM A CASE OF ADVANCED SYPHILIS. HE IS NOT MISSED.

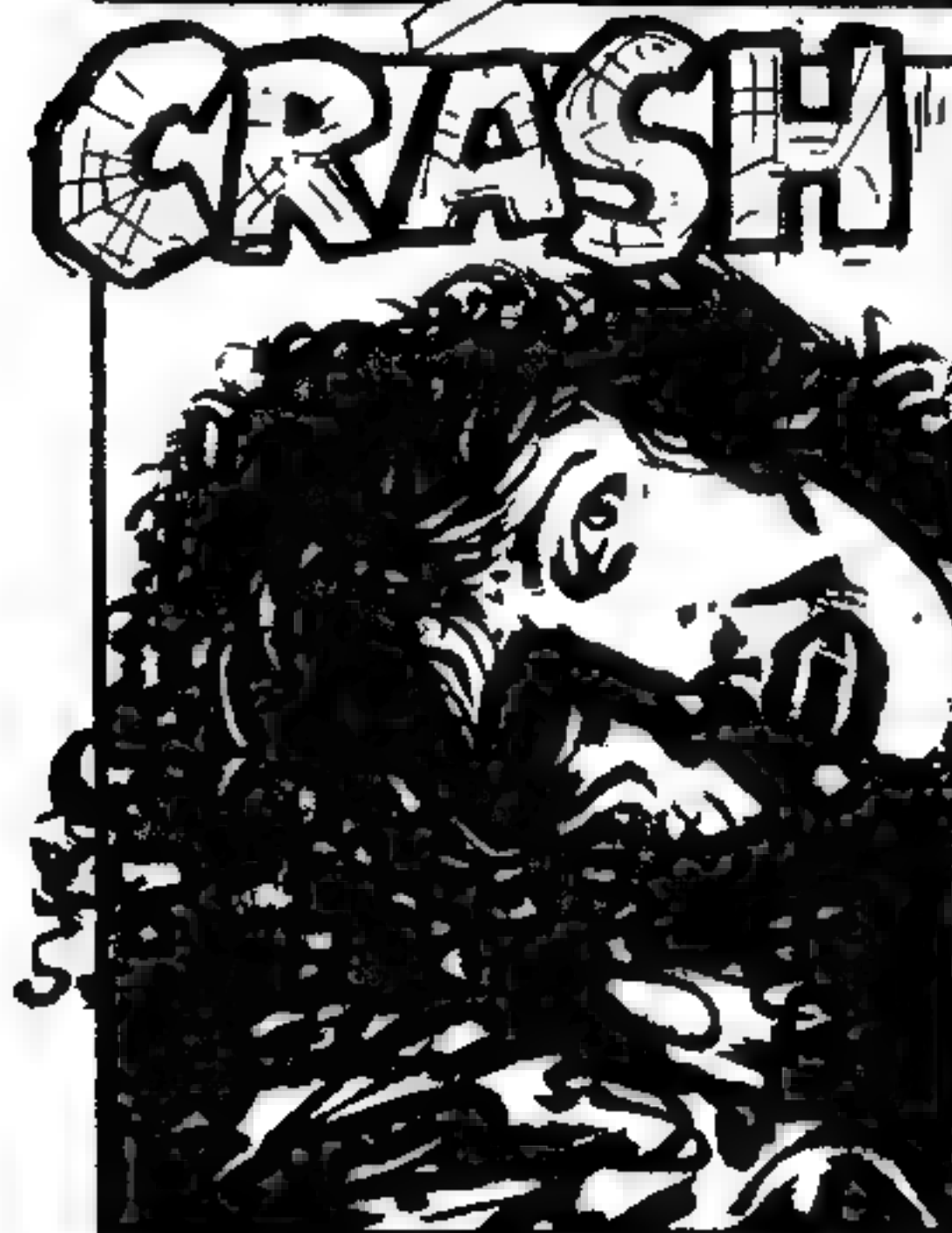
THE END.

NOW BACK TO YOU, DICK!

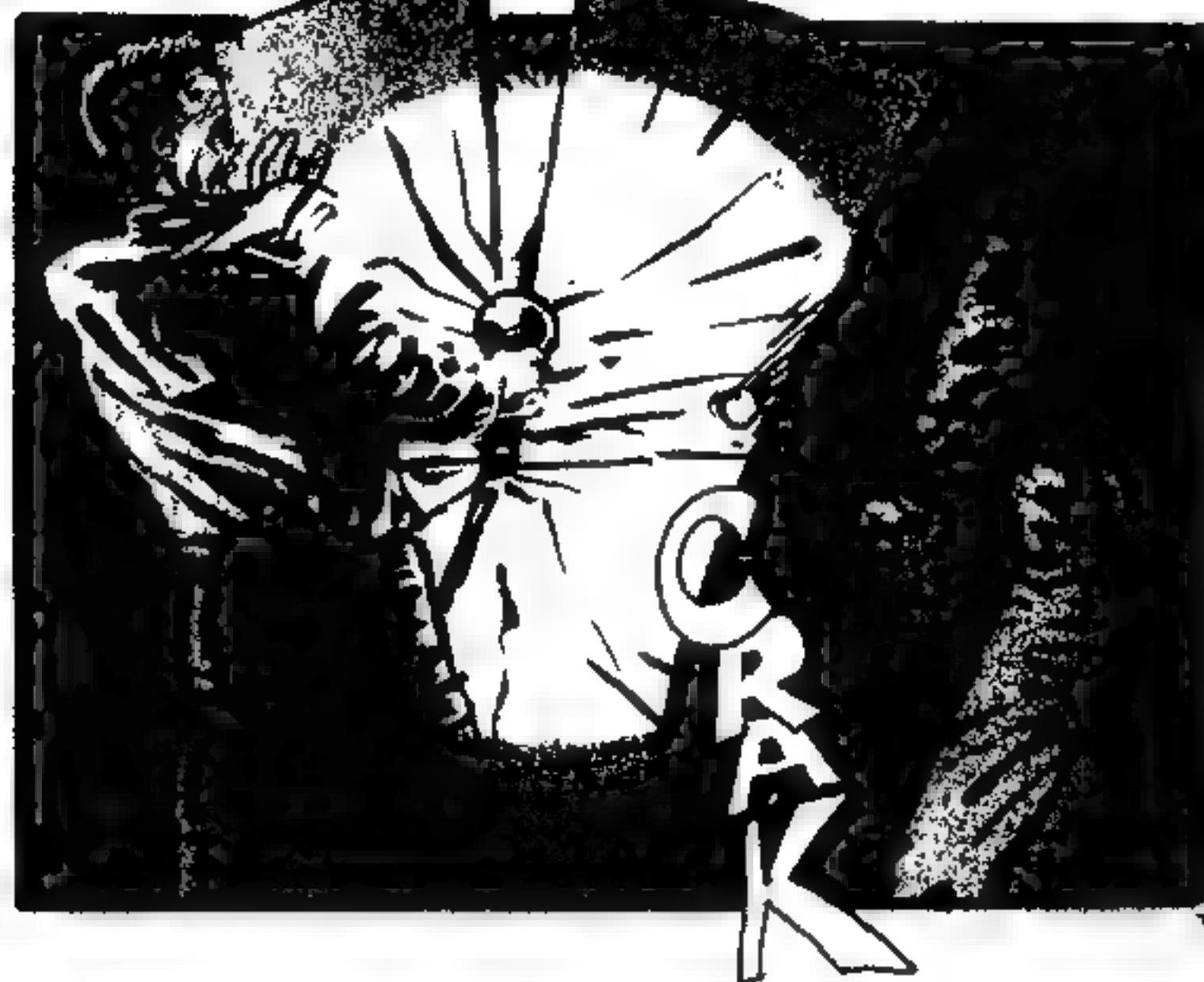
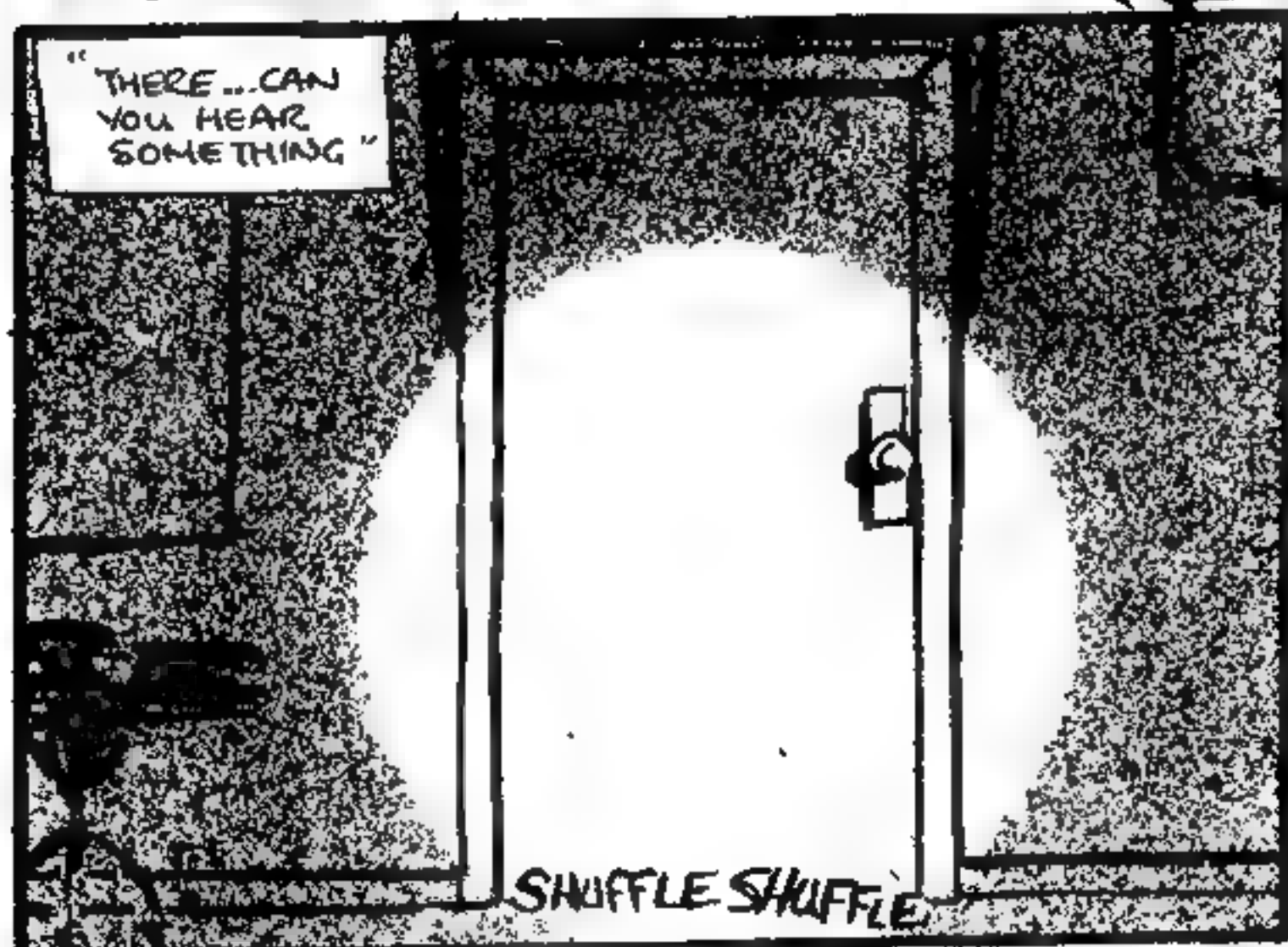
HE IS RELEASED FROM PRISON. THE GOVERNMENT-OWNED MEDIA TURNS HIM INTO A "NATIONAL HERO".

AND THAT MEANS "MY WALLET PULSATES! I YEARN TO SHOWER THE S&L'S WITH HOT LOVE MONEY!"









I NEVER KNEW ANYONE SO KEENLY ALIVE TO A JOKE AS WAS THE KING. HE SEEMED TO LIVE ONLY FOR JOKING. THUS IT HAPPENED HIS SEVEN MINISTERS WERE ALL NOTED FOR THEIR ACCOMPLISHMENTS AS JOKERS. AS FOR THE NUANCES OF WIT, HE TROUBLED HIMSELF LITTLE. HIS TASTE WAS BROAD, AND PRACTICAL JOKES SUITED IT BETTER THAN VERBAL ONES.



edgar allan poe's

HOP FROG

adapted and illustrated by ERIC STANWAY

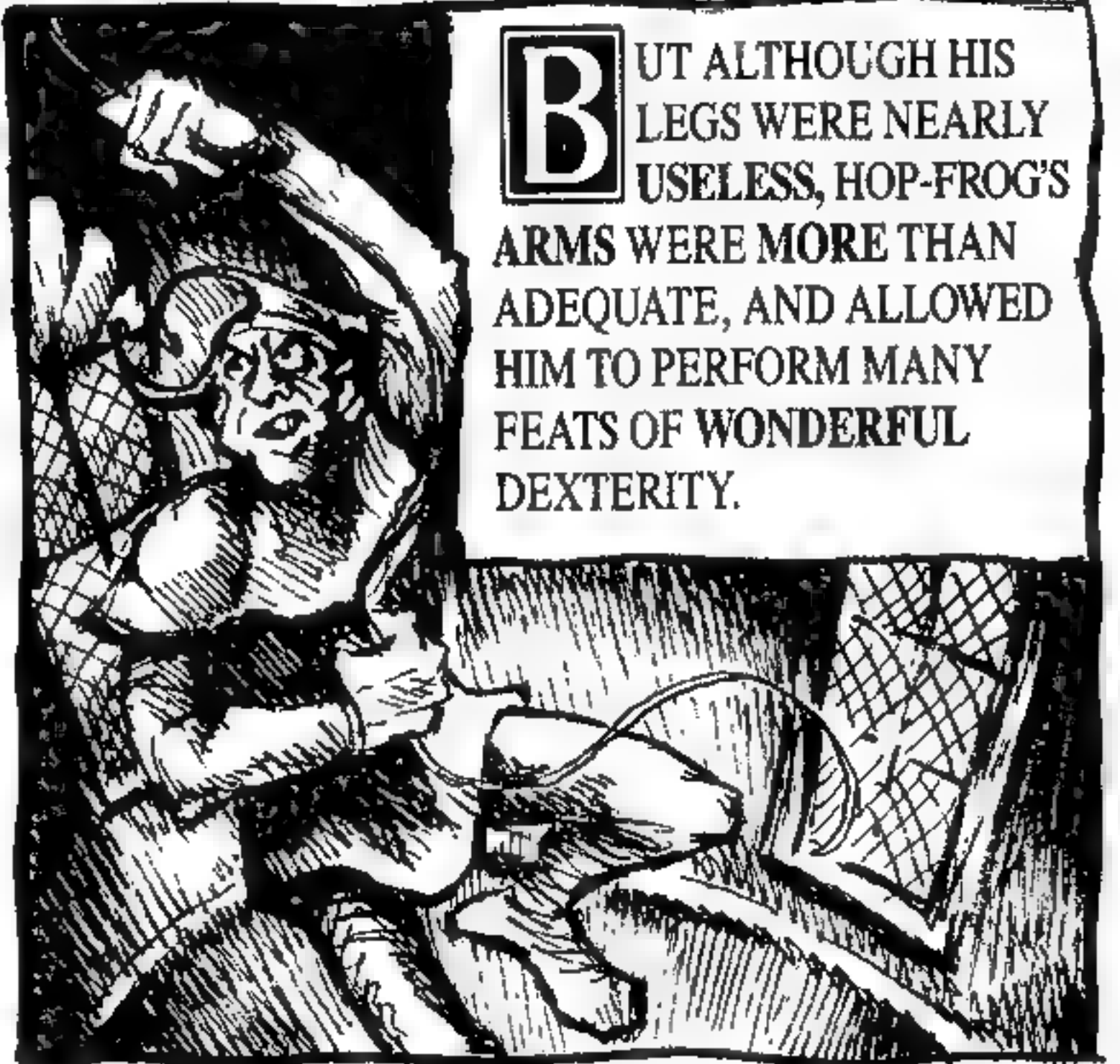
OUR KING, AS A MATTER OF COURSE RETAINED HIS "FOOL." BUT NOT JUST ANY FOOL – HIS VALUE WAS TREBLED, BY THE FACT THAT HE WAS ALSO A DWARF AND A CRIPPLE.



HIS NAME, THE KING TOLD ME, WAS "HOP-FROG" – NOT THE NAME WITH WHICH HE WAS BAPTIZED, BUT ONE BESTOWED UPON HIM BY THE COURT, ON ACCOUNT OF HIS BEING UNABLE TO WALK IN ANY OTHER FASHION THAN BY LEAPS AND JIGGLES.



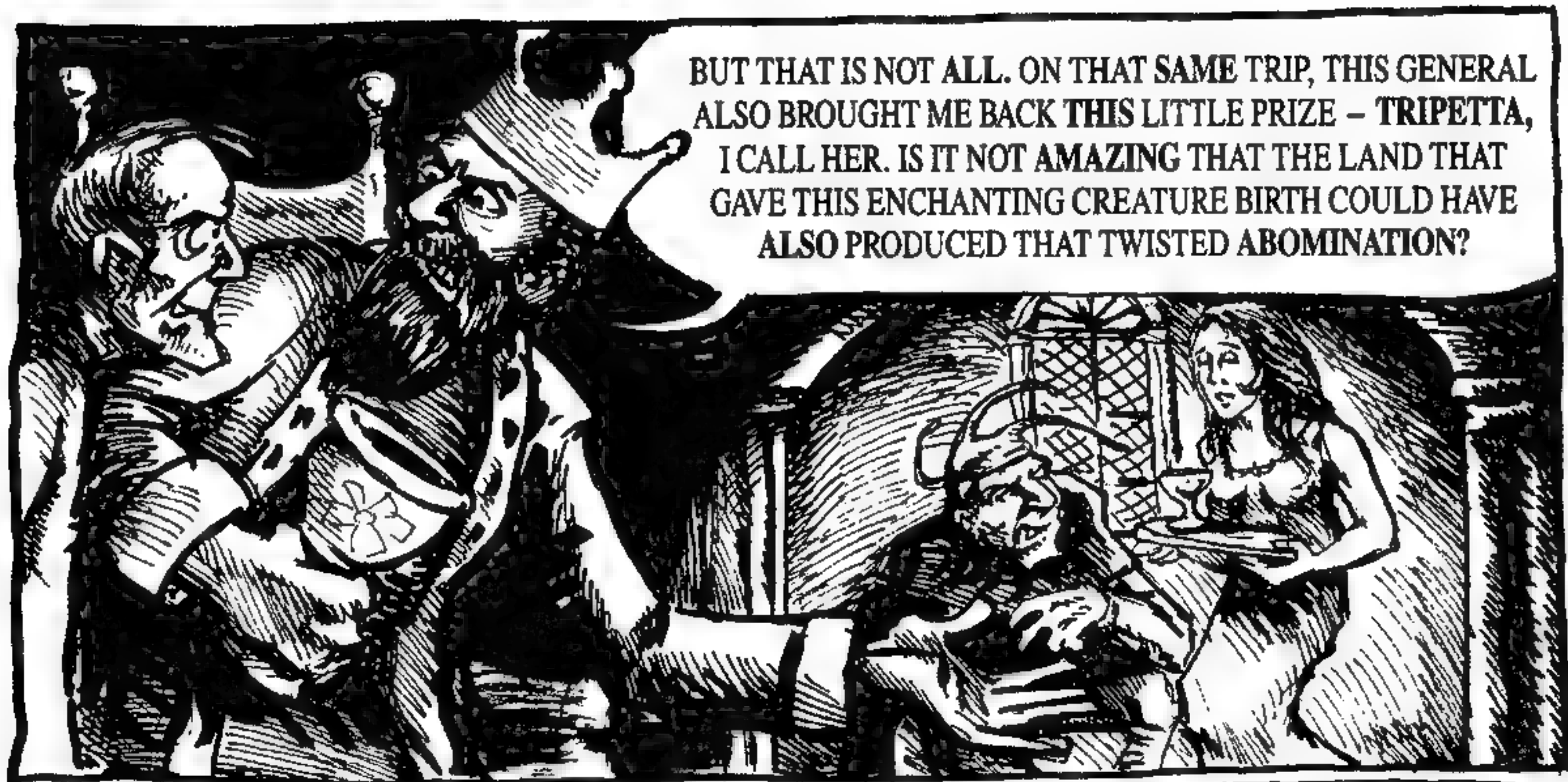
BUT ALTHOUGH HIS LEGS WERE NEARLY USELESS, HOP-FROG'S ARMS WERE MORE THAN ADEQUATE, AND ALLOWED HIM TO PERFORM MANY FEATS OF WONDERFUL DEXTERITY.



SIRE, HE IS MARVELOUS!
WHERE EVER DID YOU GET HIM?

HOP-FROG? AH – SOME
BARBAROUS LAND – CAN'T
REMEMBER THE NAME. HE'S A
PRESENT, YOU KNOW – FROM
ONE OF MY GENERALS.





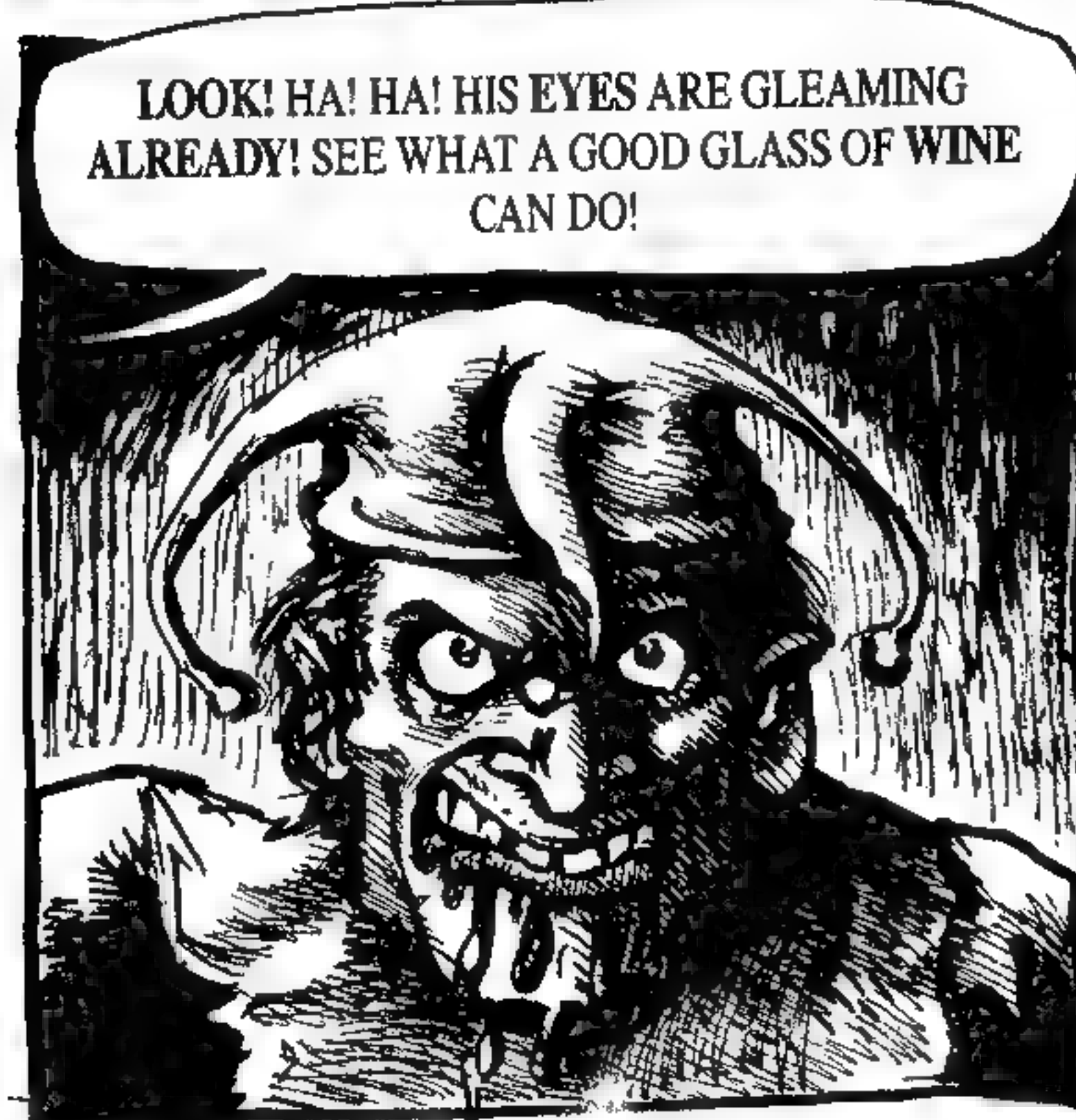
BUT THAT IS NOT ALL. ON THAT SAME TRIP, THIS GENERAL ALSO BROUGHT ME BACK THIS LITTLE PRIZE – TRIPETTA, I CALL HER. IS IT NOT AMAZING THAT THE LAND THAT GAVE THIS ENCHANTING CREATURE BIRTH COULD HAVE ALSO PRODUCED THAT TWISTED ABOMINATION?



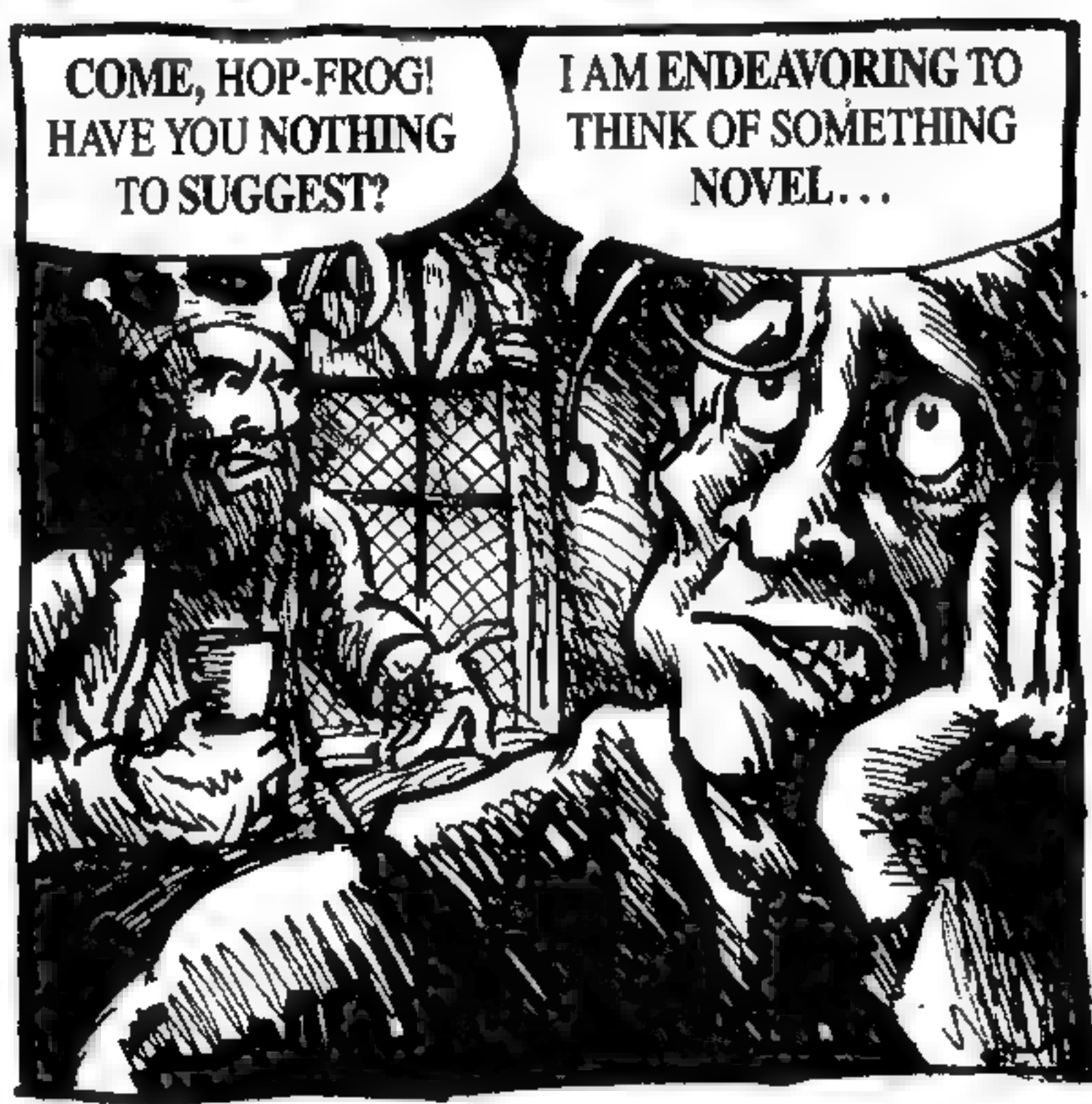
HOP-FROG, COME HERE, AND DRINK THIS GOBLET TO YOUR ABSENT FRIENDS.



DRINK, MAN – DRINK!
WE NEED SOMETHING NOVEL
– WE ARE WEARIED
WITH YOUR EVERLASTING
SAMENESS.

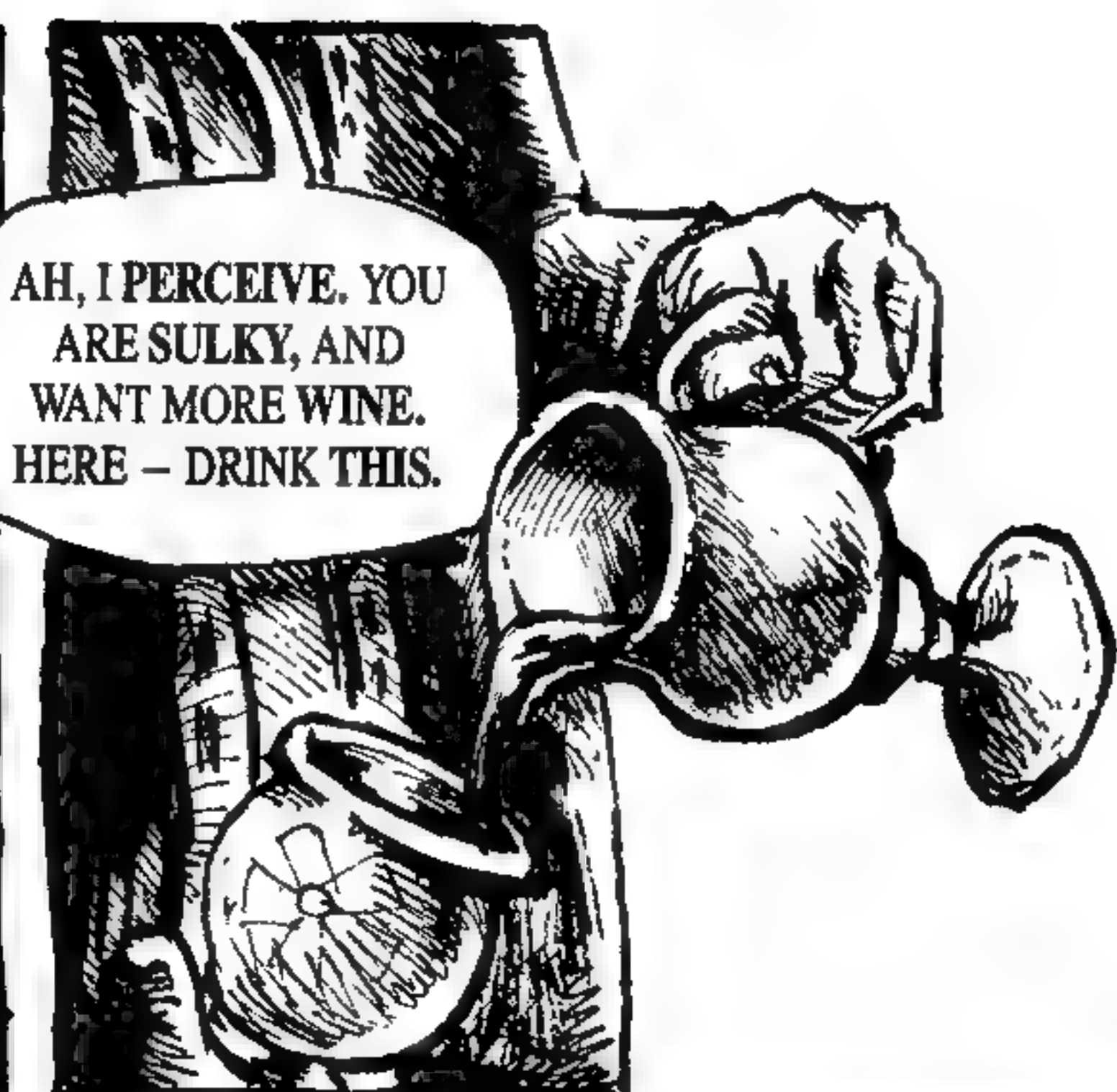


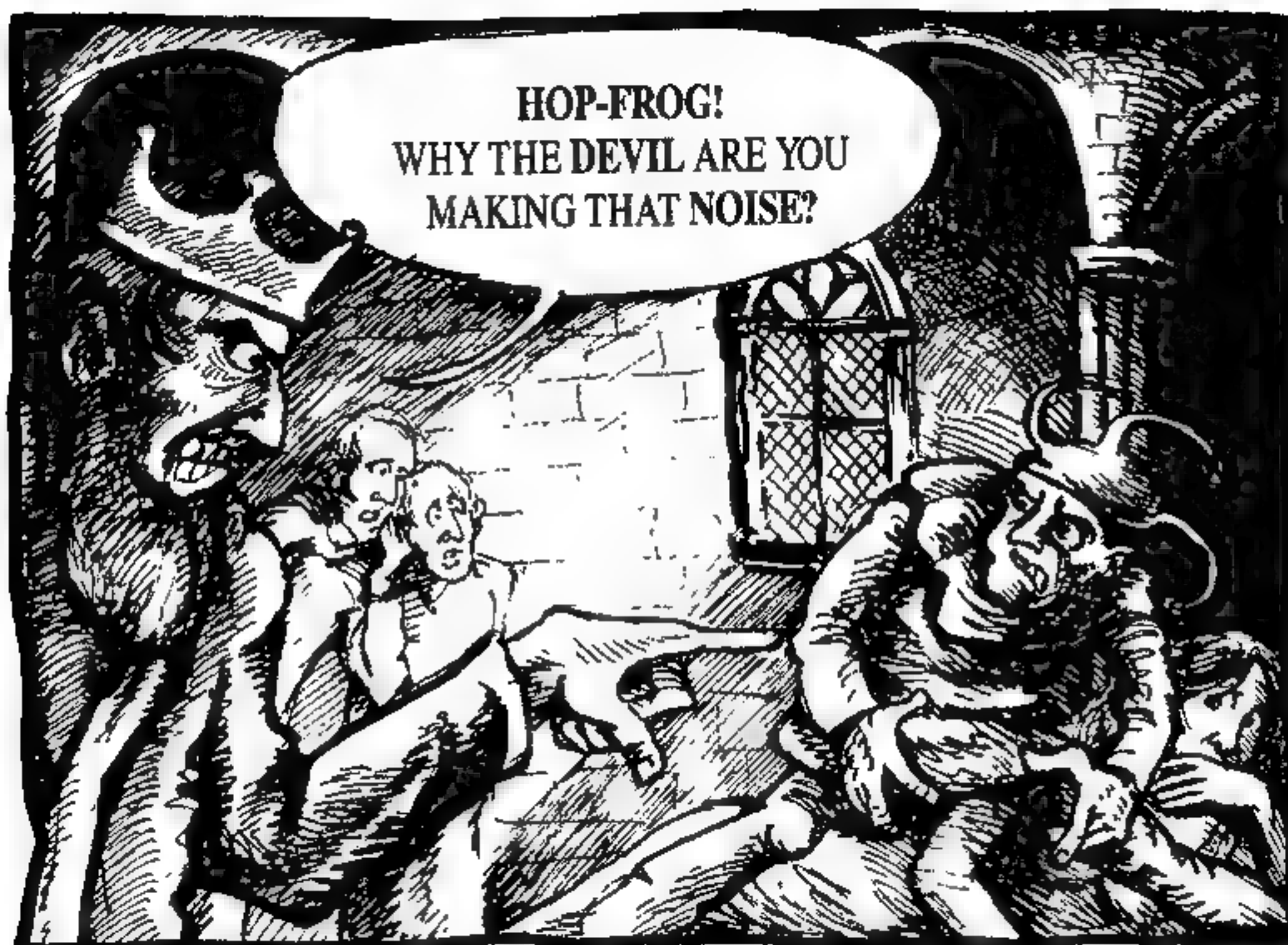
LOOK! HA! HA! HIS EYES ARE GLEAMING
ALREADY! SEE WHAT A GOOD GLASS OF WINE
CAN DO!



COME, HOP-FROG!
HAVE YOU NOTHING
TO SUGGEST?

I AM ENDEAVORING TO
THINK OF SOMETHING
NOVEL...

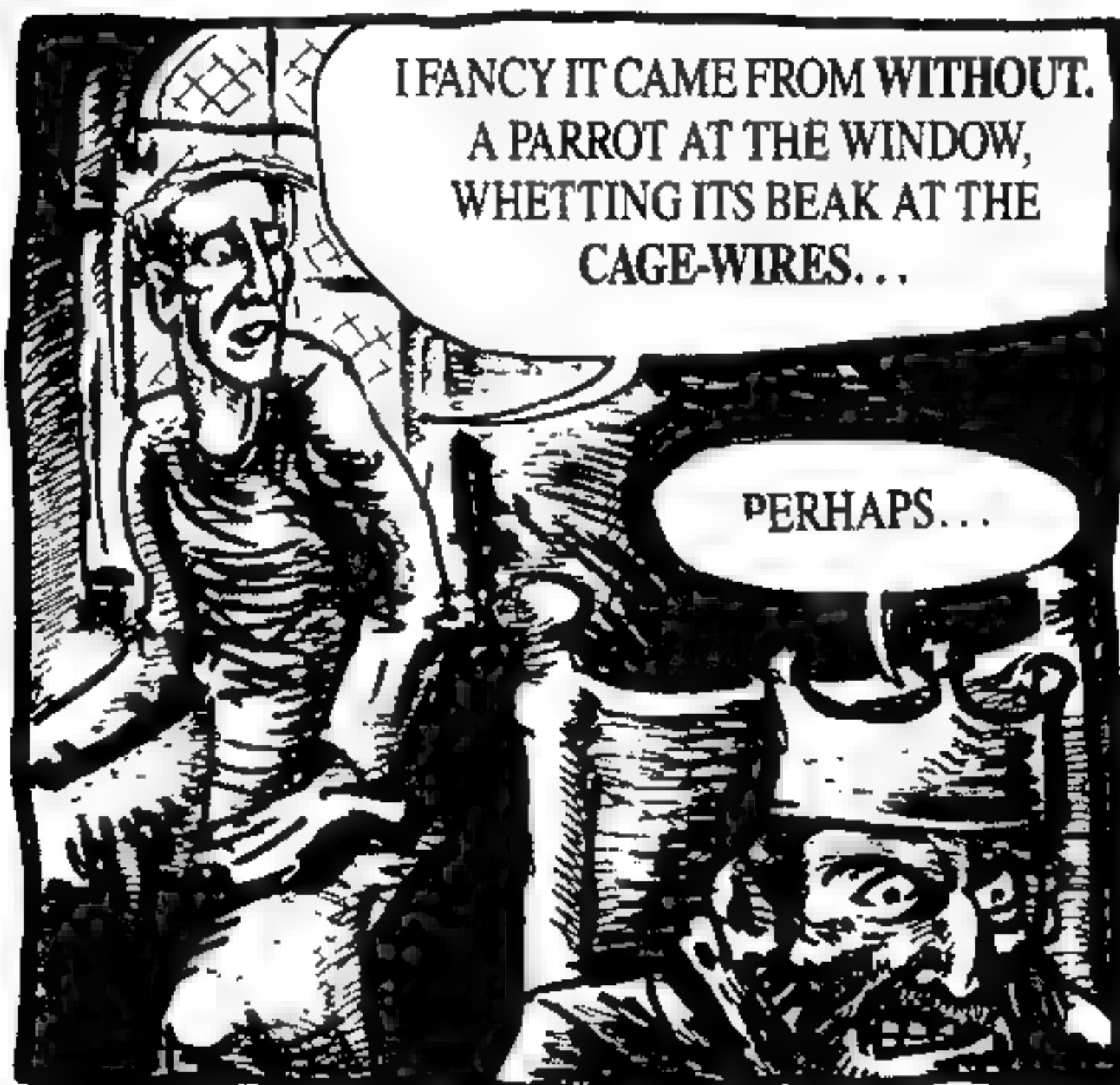




HOP-FROG!
WHY THE DEVIL ARE YOU
MAKING THAT NOISE?

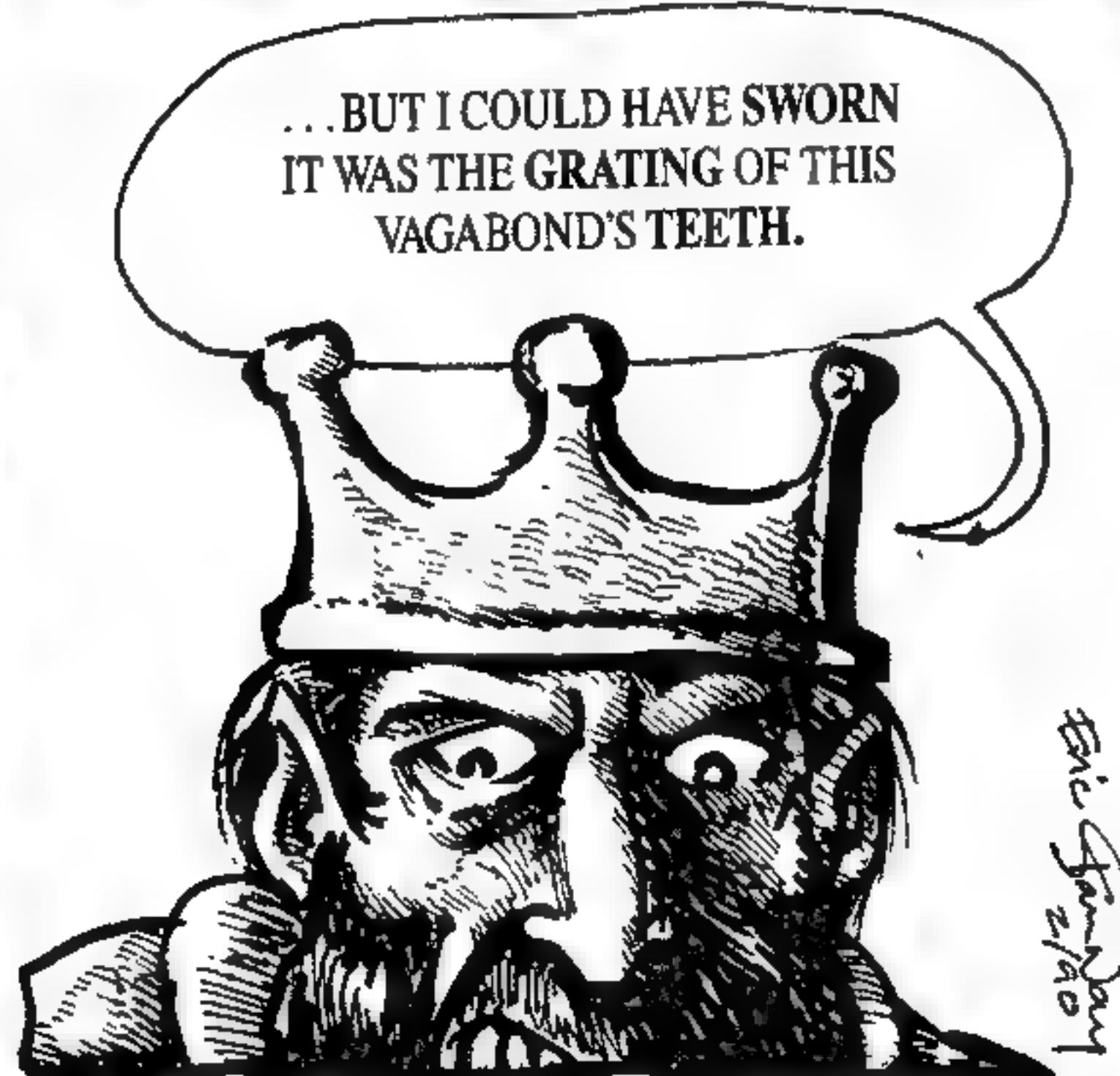


I – I? HOW COULD
IT HAVE BEEN ME?



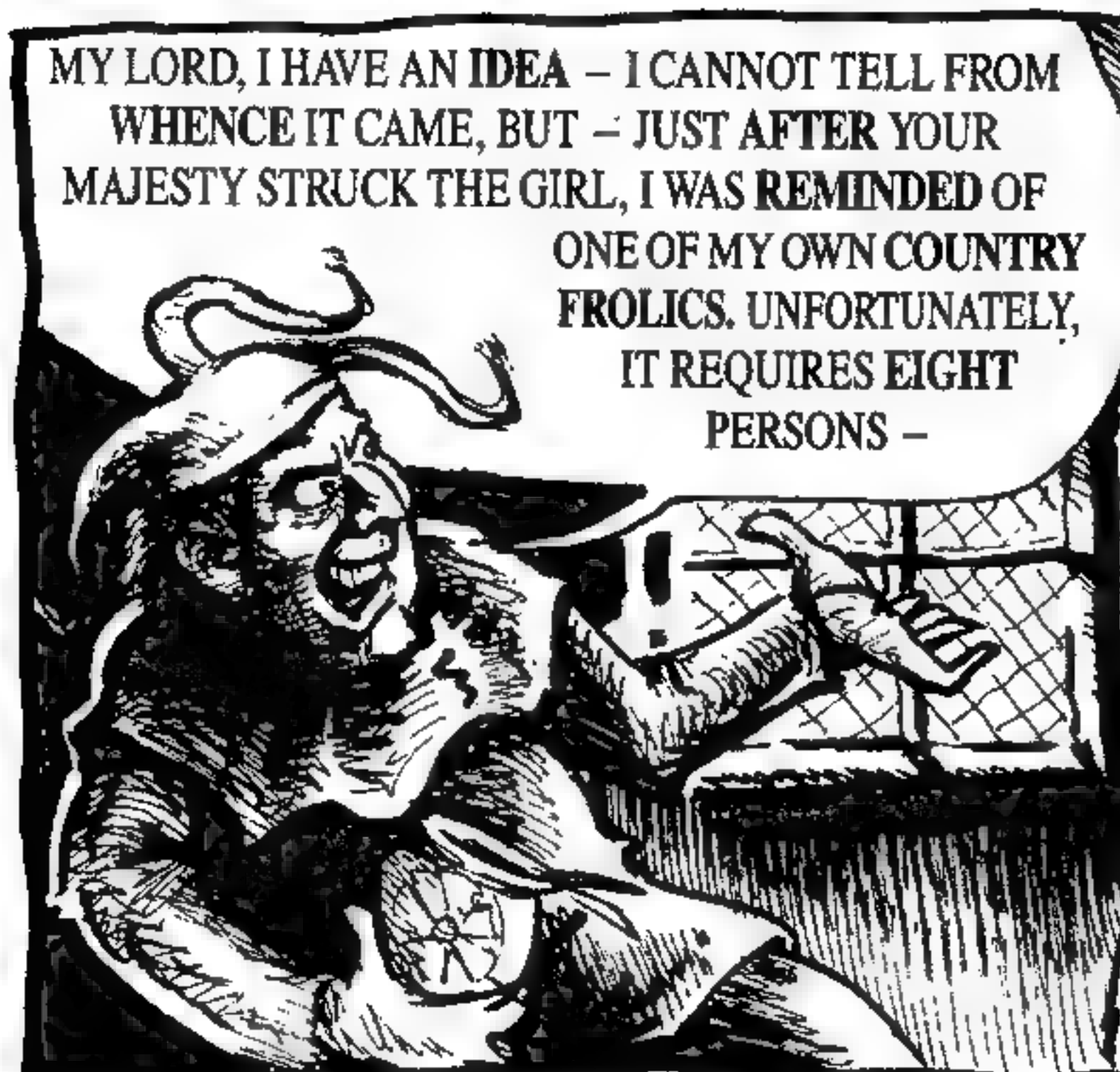
IF I FANCY IT CAME FROM WITHOUT.
A PARROT AT THE WINDOW,
WHETTING ITS BEAK AT THE
CAGE-WIRES...

PERHAPS...



...BUT I COULD HAVE SWORN
IT WAS THE GRATING OF THIS
VAGABOND'S TEETH.

Eric Sponson
2/10/01



MY LORD, I HAVE AN IDEA – I CANNOT TELL FROM
WHENCE IT CAME, BUT – JUST AFTER YOUR
MAJESTY STRUCK THE GIRL, I WAS REMINDED OF
ONE OF MY OWN COUNTRY
FROLICS. UNFORTUNATELY,
IT REQUIRES EIGHT
PERSONS –



AND HERE WE ARE – I AND MY SEVEN
MINISTERS. COME, WHAT IS THE DIVERSION?

WE CALL IT "THE EIGHT CHAINED ORANG-OUTANS," AND IT IS REALLY EXCELLENT SPORT, IF ENACTED.



IMAGINE, IF YOU WILL, SIRE, A GREAT BALL — ALL THE NOBLES IN THE LAND GATHERED IN THEIR FINERY. EIGHT BEASTS ARE THEN INTRODUCED INTO THEIR MIDST —



THE BEASTS SHALL BE YOURSELVES, MADE UP IN A WAY THAT I SHALL STIPULATE. YOU SHALL BE CHAINED TOGETHER, AS YOU ARE SUPPOSED TO HAVE ESCAPED FROM YOUR KEEPERS, *EN MASSE*.



THE BEAUTY OF THE GAME LIES IN THE FRIGHT IT OCCASIONS AMONG THE WOMEN...



OH, THIS IS EXQUISITE!
HOP-FROG, I SHALL MAKE A MAN OF YOU!



A

GREAT BALL WAS QUICKLY ARRANGED,
AND HELD AT THE CASTLE ONE WEEK LATER.
MANY GREAT NOBLES CAME AT OUR LORD'S
COMMAND, FROM ALL ABOUT THE KINGDOM.



T

HE ROOM IN WHICH THE MASQUERADE
WAS TO BE HELD WAS TALL AND LOFTY,
LIT BY ONE CIRCULAR WINDOW AT THE
TOP, FROM WHICH DESCENDED A SINGLE
CHANDELIER.



H

OP-FROG HAD SUGGESTED THAT THE
WAX FROM THE CANDLES MIGHT
DAMAGE THE CLOTHES OF THE GUESTS.
THE CHANDELIER WAS THUS REMOVED, LEAVING
THE HOOK CONSPICUOUSLY BARE.



T

HE EIGHT ORANG-OUTANS, TAKING
HOP-FROG'S ADVICE, WAITED UNTIL
MIDNIGHT BEFORE MAKING THEIR
APPEARANCE.





SAINTS PRESERVE US!
WHAT ARE THESE BEASTS?

OOF...
THESE CONFOUNDED
CHAINS...



LEAVE THEM TO ME!
I FANCY I KNOW THEM!



IF I CAN ONLY GET A
GOOD LOOK...



WHAT...

I SHALL SOON FIND OUT
WHO THEY ARE!

NOW I SEE DISTINCTLY.
THEY ARE A GREAT KING,
AND HIS SEVEN PRIVY
COUNSELORS...

A KING... WHO DOES NOT
HESITATE TO STRIKE A
DEFENSELESS GIRL...

...AND HIS SEVEN
COUNSELORS, WHO
ABET HIM IN THIS
OUTRAGE...

HOP-FROG...
WHAT IS THE
MEANING
OF THIS?

I'LL HAVE
YOUR HEAD
FOR THIS!

SCRITCH... SCRITCH... SCRITCH

AND I?
I AM
SIMPLY
HOP-
FROG—

AAHARGH!



HURLING HIS TORCH AT THE FETID, BLACKENED CORPSES, THE CRIPPLE CLAMBERED LEISURELY UP THE CHAIN, AND MADE HIS ESCAPE THROUGH THE SKY-LIGHT.



IT IS SUPPOSED THAT TRIPPETTA, STATIONED ON THE ROOF, HAD BEEN HER FRIEND'S ACCOMPLICE IN HIS FIERY REVENGE...



AND TOGETHER, THEY AFFECTED THEIR ESCAPE TO THEIR OWN COUNTRY, FOR NEITHER WAS SEEN AGAIN.

• E • N • D •



GROWING UP

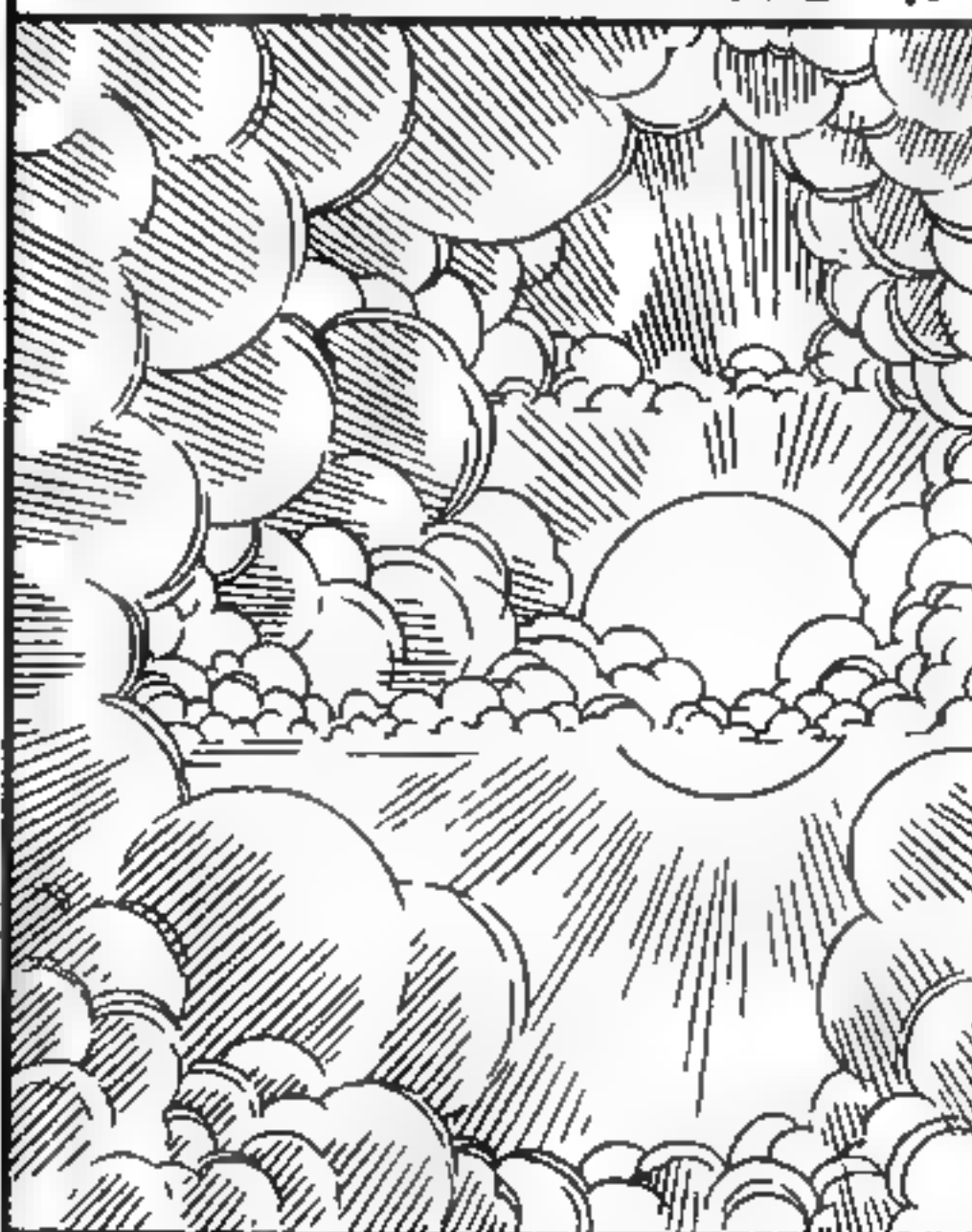
BY McCOLLUM & ANDERSON



"I REMEMBER FLOATING AT FIRST, FOR THE LONGEST TIME."



"AND I SPENT A LONG TIME WATCHING THE CLOUDS. THEY WERE SO PRETTY."



"I WAS BEING SUMMONED, BUT I HAD TO SEE THE PEOPLE. THEY WERE WONDERFUL!"



"I JUST LOVED THEM ALL. IT CAME SO NATURALLY."



"I RESOLVED TO ALWAYS HELP THEM, AS I WAS DRAWN FORTH."



"AND WHEN I SAW WHO'D CALLED ME FORTH, I KNEW I'D BE ABLE TO."



"DRESSED IN THE NICEST RED ROBE, SHE WAS THE MOST ENCHANTING LITTLE GIRL I'D EVER MET."



"SHE WAS A GOOD LITTLE WITCH."



"AND WE HAD SUCH FUN TOGETHER! WE ROAMED THE WORLD, HELPING EVERYBODY WE COULD."



"WE'D HELP IN SUBTLE WAYS, GIVING WHAT WE COULD."



"THE BEST THINGS WE GAVE WERE LOVE AND HOPE."



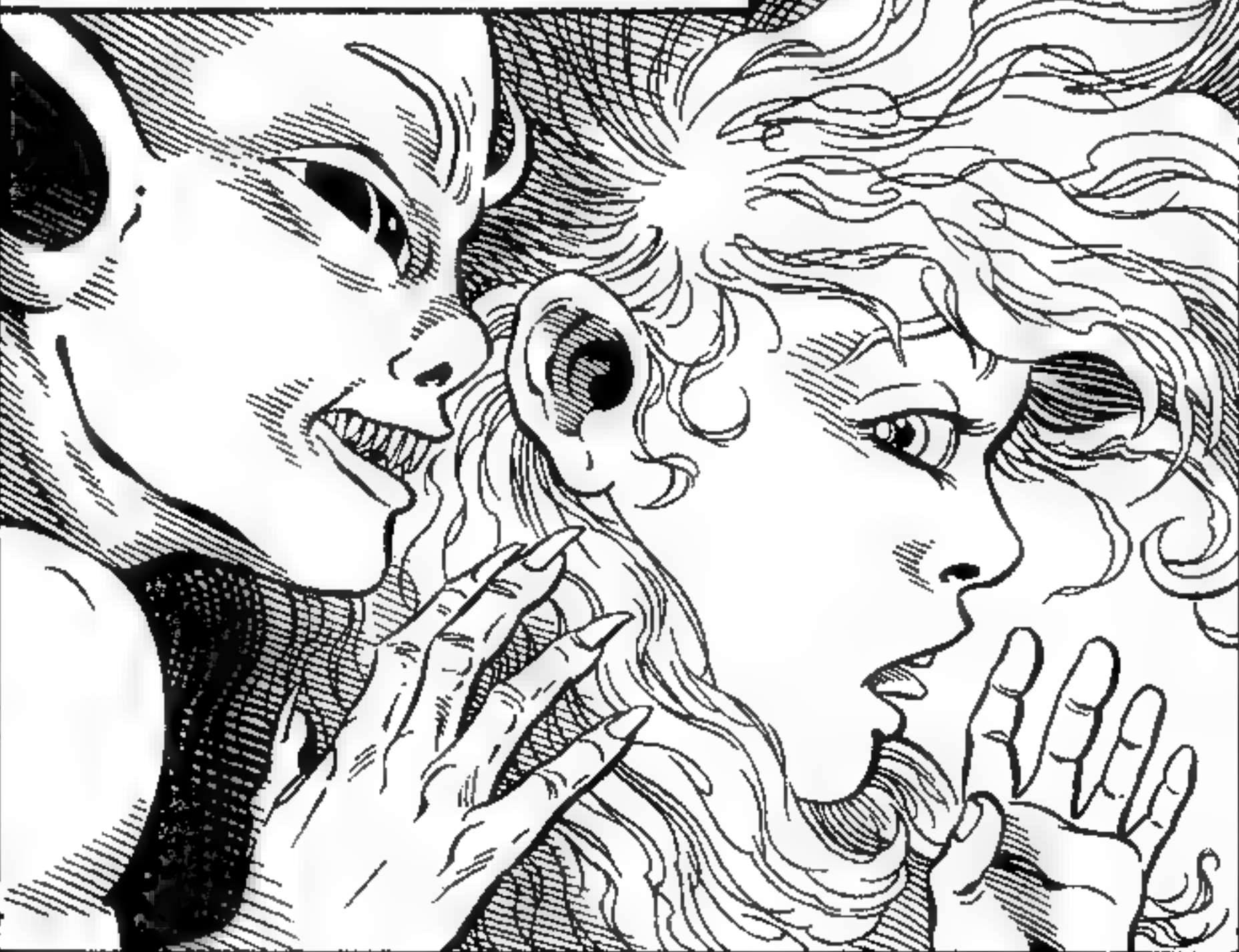
"PEOPLE WERE SO SPECIAL. WE CHERISHED THEM, EVERY ONE."



"WE EVEN FOUND ANOTHER FRIEND. ESTARTE HAD A LOT OF IDEAS."



"AND HE'D WHISPER THEM TO HER. SHE'D NEVER TELL ME WHAT HE SAID."



"THIS WENT ON FOR YEARS. I LOST COUNT HOW MANY."



"SHE CHANGED AS TIME PASSED. IT GREW HARD TO TALK TO HER."



"I'D SNEAK UP ON HER TO SEE WHAT SHE WAS DOING SOMETIMES."



"I DIDN'T UNDERSTAND."

"THEN SHE STARTED DOING BAD THINGS. IT MADE ME SAD. I ASKED HER WHY SHE DID THEM..."



GO AWAY!
LEAVE ME
ALONE!



"BUT SHE WAS MY FRIEND. I WOULDN'T DESERT HER. I HAD TO KNOW."



"I KEPT ASKING AND ASKING..."



"FINALLY, SHE GOT TIRED OF IT.
AND SHE TOLD ME."



IT'S SIMPLE.
I GREW UP.
YOU DIDN'T.

I'M ALIVE.
YOU'RE STILL
DEAD.

"WELL, I GUESS I KNEW THAT, KIND OF."

"BUT WHERE IS THE LOVE?
WE HAD SUCH LOVE..."

YOU'RE FOOLING
YOURSELF. BUT I
UNDERSTAND.

I THOUGHT
THAT WAY,
TOO.



"YOU'VE BEEN
TALKING TO ESTARTE."

YES! HE'S
TOLD ME THE TRUTH
ABOUT MYSELF!
AND YOU!

"I FOUND OUT ABOUT WHERE HE'S
FROM... HE KNOWS NOTHING ABOUT
LOVE."

AND YOU
THINK YOU DO?





"I KNOW ABOUT LOVE.
EVERYBODY LOVES ME.
I LOVE EVERYBODY."

EVERYBODY?
DID YOUR MOTHER
LOVE YOU?

"I'VE NEVER THOUGHT... ABOUT HER.
I'M SURE SHE LOVED ME."

LOVED YOU? HAH!
YOU CRIED SO MUCH
AS AN INFANT YOU
DROVE HER MAD!
SHE SMOTHERED
YOU WITH A PILLOW
AND THREW YOU OUT
WITH THE GARBAGE!



"SHE SHOULDN'T HAVE TOLD
ME. I DIDN'T NEED TO KNOW.
THAT'S WHEN THINGS CHANGED."



"I KNEW SHE WAS NO
LONGER A GOOD LITTLE
WITCH. SHE NEEDED TO
BE PUNISHED."



"AND I FOUND SPIRITUAL
POWERS I'D NEVER
SUSPECTED I HAD."



"REALITY HAD CHANGED. I WOULD HUNT
DOWN ESTARTE AND DESTROY HIM FOR
THE CORRUPTION OF MY BELOVED FRIEND.
I'D SHOW HIM HE WASN'T SUCH HOT STUFF."

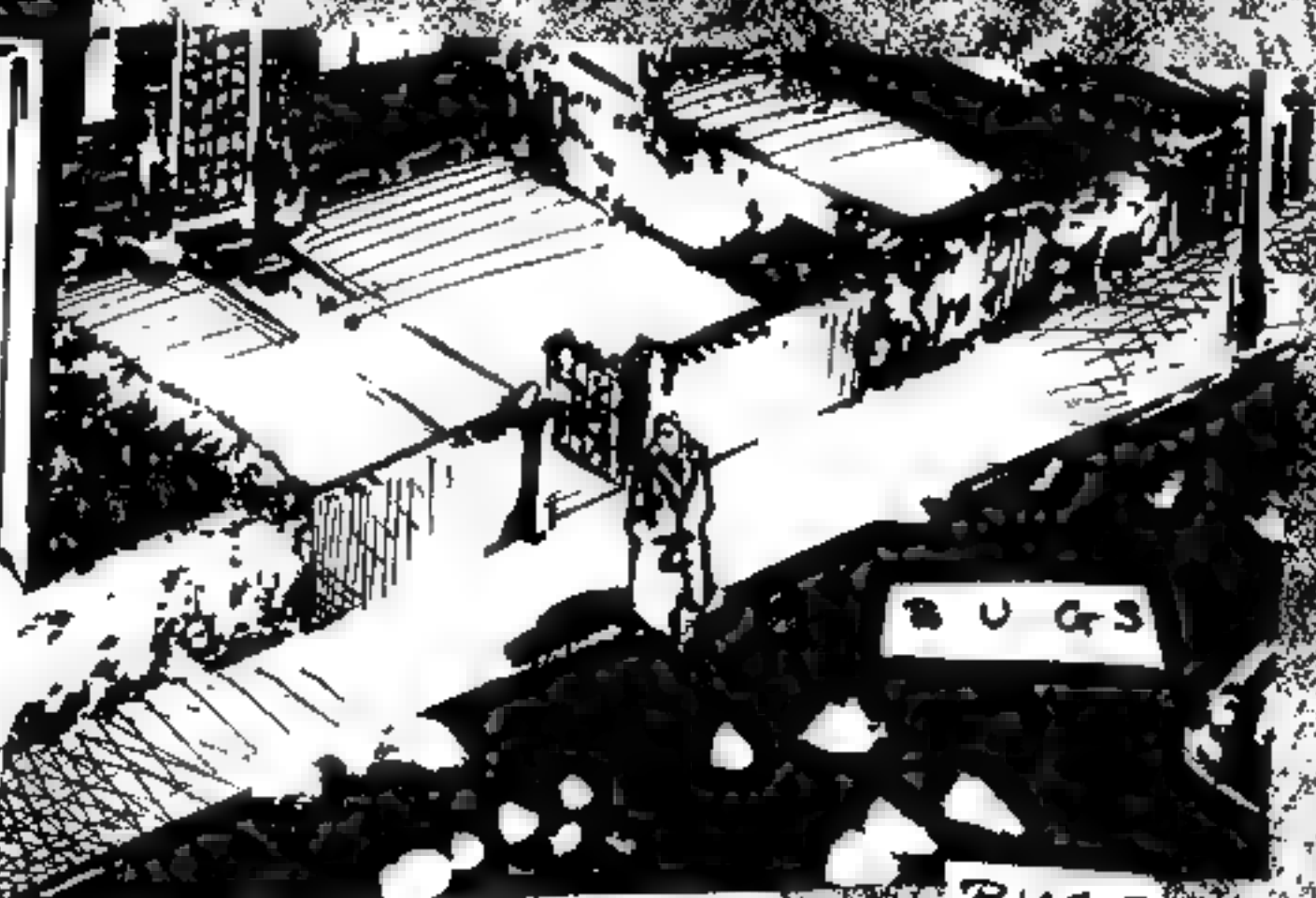


"I WAS A FRIENDLY
GHOST NO MORE"

END.



BUGS



BUGS

BUGS

BUGS



BUGS

BUGS

BUGS



BUGS

BUGS



HELLO, MAJOR!
FANCY A PINT?

BUGS

PUB LUNCH

GARY CRUTCHLEY
CHRIS PRZYGRÓDZKI
BEN DILWORTH



NOT BIG FRIENDLY
GUYS LIKE BEETLES
AND CENTIPEDES
AND WOODLICE...

I'LL HAVE A BITTER, PETE



HELLO?



CHEERS.



HELLO?

UH... HELLO? THE DOOR
WAS OPEN SO...

NO...
THE LITTLE BOYS



I'M YOUR NEXT
DOOR NEIGH...



THE BASTARD KILLERS THAT
SPAWN AND DIVIDE IN YOUR
FOOD

SPLITTING CELLS IN YOUR
STOMACH

MICROWAVE MURDERERS.

GROWING IN US ALL...

...TRIED TO GET ME...
...MY OWN WIFE...

HAD TO CUT THE BUGS
OUT ONE BY ONE....

"EAT IT, DADDY!"

"EAT IT!"

COULD SEE THE BUGS
FOAMING IN HER MOUTH

MY SWEET, SWEET ENMA,

HAPPY
FAMILIES.

HERE. IT'S THE
POLICE FOR YOU,
MATOR.

MR. MATOR?
MR. JOHN MATOR?



SIR... IT'S... I'M SORRY...



NO NO OFFICERS.
MY WIFE AND DAUGHTER ARE DEAD.
BUT DON'T BE SORRY - YOU SEE....

IF THE BUGS
DON'T GET YOU...



THE BOGEYMAN
WILL!



BUGS!

ALL!

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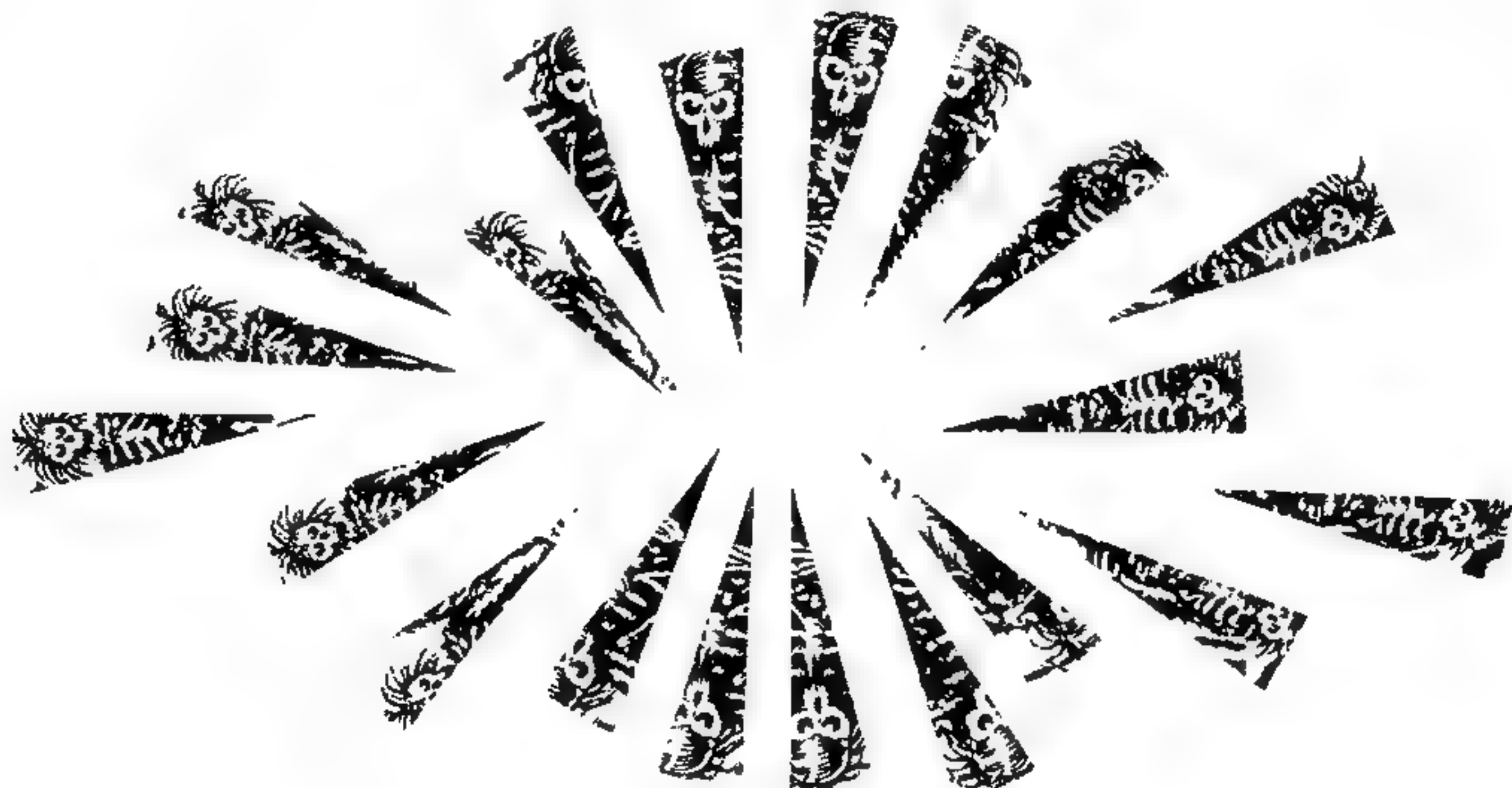
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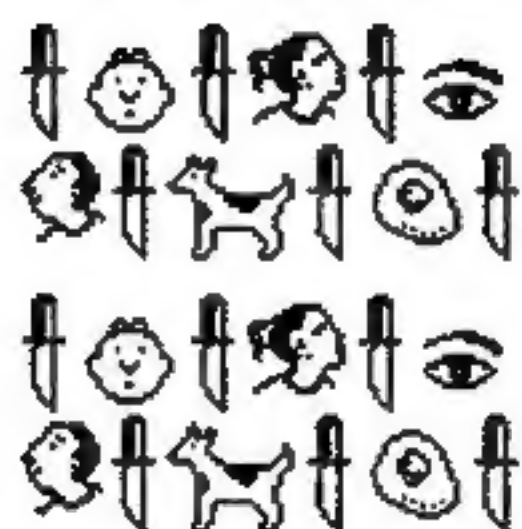
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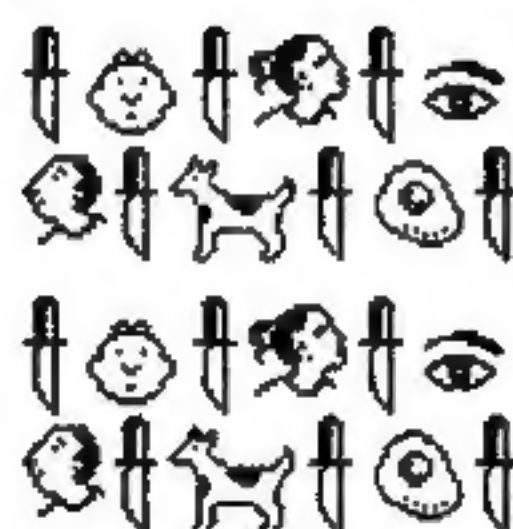


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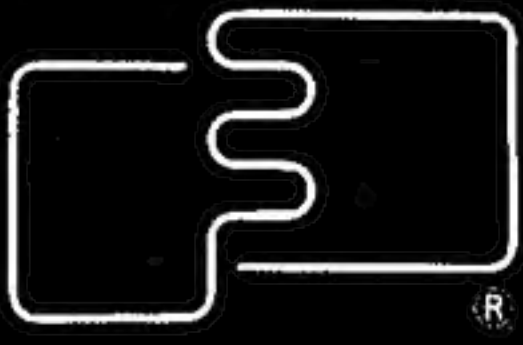
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